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THE

GREAT HOUSE;

OR,

VARIETIES OF AMERICAN LIFE.

A DRAMA.

By AMELIA PRINGLE CAMPBELL.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

A YEAR since, I was induced by a relative to see "The World," then running at Wallack's. I had scarce ever been to a theatre before, and the impression produced was so vivid, that the plot of this play was formed before I left the house. In the course of a short time I had written it out, but not knowing how to arrange and model it, I laid it aside.

A recent event* recalled it to my recollection. A year in the city had greatly developed my mind, and I have now devoted to this Drama my best endeavors.

I have seen and read very few plays. Conscious of possessing a tendency to enthusiasm and romance, I early formed the resolution to study history and biography, and to eschew works of imagination; yet, having once witnessed the above striking representation, the natural bent of my mind burst through all barriers and thus asserted itself.

The name of Stuyvesant occurred to me in connection with the first Governor of New York. The manager is at liberty to introduce any other name and any other ancestor, whom he may desire to compliment, in place of the revered Peter.

In venturing to bring forward my heroine in the character of a servant, I have used the historical name of Randolph for a Virginia family, to give interest to the narrative, and to heighten the contrast of her varied fortunes.

It seems to the author (independently of religious faith) the proper poetic idea to represent Marie, (when despoiled and abandoned in this great city), trusting in God for protection.

Earnestly requesting the favorable indulgence of the public,

I subscribe myself hopefully,

A. P. C.

* The Withdrawal of a *Great Mercantile House*.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

CHARLES RANDOLPH,* (*Brother of MARIE*).

FRANK STUYVESANT, *a young lawyer*.

MR. STUYVESANT, SR., *FRANK's father*.

MR. BLOUNT, *MARIE's uncle by marriage*.

CLERK OF COURT.

PROBATE JUDGE.

JUDGE TRYON, *head of the Great House*.

MR. SCREWF, *head of department*.

GEORGE HILL, *defaulting cashier of department*.

JUDGE KINGDOM, *presides in Court Room*.

JONES.	}	<i>Salesmen.</i>
CALDWELL.		
BROWN.		

FOX.	}	<i>Lawyers.</i>
SHARPE.		
ROUNDAABOUT.		

BYSTANDER.

TWO CLERKS.

TURNKEY.

JEWELLER'S CLERK.

CLERGYMAN *appears only in marriage scene*.

AUGUSTUS O'LEARY *appears as witness once*.

THREE LITTLE BOYS, STUYVESANTS, *appear twice*.

MARIE RANDOLPH,* *heroine*.

MRS. BLOUNT, *her aunt*.

MRS. ARMITAGE, *bereaved widow (her son has died from work in the Great House, and she is partially deranged)*.

THREE LADY VISITORS *to MRS. BLOUNT*.

MRS. STUYVESANT, *mother to FRANK*.

MRS. HILL, *mother to GEORGE HILL*.

THREE CHILIKEN (HILLS) *present at trial*.

LADY —

MME. MANTIAU, *a dress-maker*.

Mlle. FANDANGO, *a milliner*.

CLARINDA, *MARIE's colored nurse*.

JANE, *MRS. BLOUNT's Irish servant*.

ANOTHER SERVANT.

TWO MAIDS, *MRS. STUYVESANTS, appear once*.

LITTLE BEGGAR BOY.

DIM FORMS OF ANGELS.

FIVE PARK POLICEMEN.

* MARIE is sixteen and CHARLES fourteen years old.

ARGUMENT.

Two orphan children—MARIE and CHARLES RANDOLPH—are persuaded by the CLERK OF COURT, the PROBATE JUDGE, and their lawyer (FOX), to give up all their property into their charge. They form a plan to retain the whole ; and the children, deprived by them of all means, take refuge with an aunt in New York. Their old nurse CLARINDA earnestly advises them to remain, offering that her sons will work to support them. They come to their aunt ; who, finding them deprived of their property, and almost penniless on her hands, sets them to work, CHARLES in the Great House, MARIE almost as a servant for her convenience.

The Great House is then described, the management, etc. ; prison scene ; an employé who has defaulted to a small amount ; trial of the same ; LADY MRS. S—— disguised as a Sister of Charity, etc.

MARIE is turned out of doors, takes refuge in an arbor in Central Park, is sheltered by policeman's wife, takes service as nursemaid in the family of MR. STUYVESANT ; FRANK STUYVESANT, the same young lawyer who appears in the prison and the court scene, falls in love with her, secures for her his mother's care and protection, becomes engaged to her, goes to Virginia, unmasks the villainy and treachery of CLERK OF COURT, PROBATE JUDGE, and LAWYER ; MARIE and CHARLES regain possession of their property ; faithful servants assist and appear again ; final scene is the marriage of FRANK STUYVESANT and MARIE. Finale, tableau of the marriage.

THE GREAT HOUSE;

OR,

VARIETIES OF AMERICAN LIFE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Office of Clerk of Court. The PROBATE JUDGE and MR. FOX, a lawyer, are present. The CLERK is seated in an arm-chair writing at a table; two young men, his clerks, are writing at desks on one side of the room.*

CLERK OF COURT (*absently, as though he knew, but had forgotten*). How long is it since Mrs. Randolph died?

PROBATE JUDGE. Six months, and the children seem to have no idea of having the estate settled.

FOX. I have been there, and sent others; we have persuaded them that an administration is absolutely necessary.

CLERK. And when?

FOX. They will be here to-day, and we must all have our faces drawn down to the proper length.

CLERK. Poor children, I dare say they will find this world a hard one.

FOX. When you have administered I rather suppose they will.

CLERK. When I am on the scent of money I am pretty apt to find it, but I hope they will find friends to care for them; I am not cruel or vindictive, though I prefer my own interest to theirs. I even regret the necessity, for Mr. Randolph was a kind neighbor and a good man.

P. JUDGE. She did not survive him long.

FOX. When he died any one could look at her and see that she would soon follow.

CLERK (*laughing*). Don't you remember—she wanted to administer?

P. JUDGE. I was all politeness, but took good care to approve of no security that she could bring.

FOX. That was the dinner, this is the dessert, now we will have both together.

CLERK. We knew better than to let her settle the estate.

Enter MARIE and CHARLES dressed in deep mourning.

MARIE should always, until Act V., Scene 2d, be dressed in a neat, simple, black calico or lacer, hair curling long in the back, short over her brow, or parted in waves; white straw hat with black ribbon, pretty and becoming, but simple; that a petite person should take the part is preferable.

CLERK (*rises, bows low, receives them with great cordiality*). Welcome, my children; look upon me as a second father. What can I desire but your interest and welfare? I am a rich man; my only wish is to watch over the fatherless and the widow. That is alike my duty and my pleasure; money is no object to me. My motive in consenting to manage your estate, my children, is that I may save you from all the snares and deceits which might beset your tender age, were you left to face the world alone.

P. JUDGE (*comes forward, shakes hands warmly with both*). This is the very flower of our profession—one of the pleasing and delightful duties which make up for much that is dull and disagreeable.

FOX. What a pleasure to render our assistance. Lovely and highly-revered young lady, I feel all the chivalry of my youth restored only to behold you; look upon me as a father.

CHARLES. The clerk is going to be our father.

FOX. Then let me be your elder brother, look to me to arrange everything for you. (*Takes MARIE'S fair hand and looks at it.*) Ah, how unfit to face the world is this little hand—suited only to gather flowers ere the dew has risen, perhaps to paint them. I have heard of your flower painting, my dear—to care for you is the very poetry of existence. Do you think you can have patience with a blunt, plain-spoken old fellow like me?

MARIE. We are very much pleased that you gentlemen speak so kindly to us—we thank you.

CLERK. I had the greatest possible regard and respect for your father; when he was the wealthy and aristocratic Mr. Randolph, I grew up a poor boy, near his estates, and was often encouraged and befriended by him.

FOX. We all loved and honored him; to the judge he lent a helping hand; to me he gave excellent advice concerning my studies and choice of a profession.

JUDGE. A few such men as he was are the salt of a community; we who found in him a friend, now delight to care for his children. Tell me, my dear (*to MARIE*), whatever you wish that your words may be my law (*placing his hand on his heart*), everything shall be done as you desire.

MARIE. Mamma's chief anxiety was that Charles' education should be carefully finished; she wished him to have every advantage, as he is naturally talented. We hope you will take care that his studies shall not be interrupted. Will you regard our money as a sacred trust for that purpose?

JUDGE (*aside*). My conscience smites me; this child does not

think of herself; and I—— Oh! what am I? (*Aloud*). I will, so Heaven help me, thus regard it; but for yourself. Speak your wishes for yourself, my dear.

MARIE. Only that we may not be separated; that I may continue to watch over Charles, as dear mamma desired me to do.

JUDGE. I repeat that I will regard your trust as sacred. What is my duty and the object of my whole life, save to befriend and to care for the fatherless and the widow?

A BYSTANDER (*who has come in during the conversation*). He—yes, he comforts the widows, sure enough.

(MARIE *has gone to the door; she turns back, clasps her hands together, and looks up into the JUDGE'S face*. FOX and the CLERK *are standing with him*). Oh! sirs, remember (*she says*) though we have no earthly parent or protector, yet God Himself is the Father of the fatherless. Remember that He will look upon you according as you shall act by us orphan children, who trust our all to you.

CLERK (*extending his hands in the most earnest manner*). Believe in me, I will protect you, represent you, and act for you. I will care for you as for my own children.

JUDGE. If I act against you or if I deceive you, may Heaven smite me.

CHARLES. Then we trust you.

[*Exit MARIE and CHARLES.*]

The young men writing at desks withdraw at a signal from the Clerk of Court.

JUDGE. "Conscience makes cowards of us all." I don't believe I can go forward to rob those orphans of their all. When I hear that girl speak, I am a very recreant about it. I can not do it.

FOX. You are too soft-hearted; she said the same to me, and what do I care? Words are but idle breath; gold and lands are something substantial.

JUDGE. I can not carry out our scheme. You must work out your will on some one else.

FOX. Then I bring forward your pleasant little speculations with the Freeman estate, and I publish to the world how you paid off the Smith children their portions in Confederate money, which you knew to be worthless, while their own gold was lying buried in your cellar.

JUDGE. I have a little daughter—my only child. While Marie Randolph was speaking, I seemed to see before me my child, all in black as she was, and so placing herself in *your* power. It seemed that I was dead, yet I looked on and saw it.

CLERK (*takes out a bottle of brandy and glasses from a secret receptacle*). This is pure hypochondria; stick to practical realities, man. What will your daughter do if we bring forward such of your peccadilloes as we have mentioned, and some more such besides? She would find herself thrown on the world, sure enough, then. Drink something healthy and strong, and act like a man (*hands him a glass of brandy*).

JUDGE (*drinks part of it*). Oh! what a dreadful thing it is to begin to walk in the downward path; when once we have let Satan bind us and carry us his way. Oh! how hard; how impossible to turn back. Could I but have felt thus; had this conviction only been given me when I began——

FOX. To have such a fine time with widows' and orphans' estates. But those things are best forgotten. Take another glass, old fellow, and throw to the winds all such vagaries.

JUDGE. For me it is too late—too late. I can not now turn back; but, alas! my daughter, my daughter! would that I were but the poorest day laborer, and so had retained mine honor and honesty. Sometimes when I am riding in my carriage, I wish that I could be set down in the street with nothing but the clothes I wear, so that I might escape the burden and the terror with which this ill-gotten wealth continually affrights me.

FOX *places a glass of brandy to his lips and almost forces him to drink it.*

CLERK. Do stop him; give me a glass too; he has almost made me sick in the same way. (*They drink together.*)

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*Parlor in the Virginia Home. Portrait of MARIE'S mother on the wall.*

MARIE and CHARLES are seated together reading a letter.

MARIE. How kind; Charley dear, let us never forget this. (*Reads.*)

"MY DEAR CHILDREN: Your beloved mother was to me a tender parent when I was orphaned and poor; now I rejoice even in my sorrow that I can return her kindness—that I can be a parent to you. Come immediately to us; I await with impatience to behold the children of my much-loved sister.

"Your affectionate aunt,

"ELLEN BLOUNT."

MARIE. Most kind, yet I dread to leave our home and our native State. Grand old Virginia, the mother of States and of statesmen; she who gave Washington to our country. Here we were born; here are the graves of our ancestors and of our parents (*Rises and stands before the portrait, which should really be a likeness of the person who is to represent the mother's spirit later*). Oh! dearest mamma (*apostrophising the portrait*); it seems as though you can still look upon us while we are here; this place alone seems home. It may be that in this house only you can come to us, and must we leave thee and our native soil to go into the cold and cruel world which we have heard of?

The old maumer (colored woman) CLAKINDA (enters). Way you gwine, missy; not leff ole Virginny. 'Tis bad luck to leff Virginny;

stay wid yer manner, we will tak' care ob you. I got 'nough sons to work for deir little missy, for I don't trust dat clerk, nor dat lawyer Fox, him too like he name. Nor dat high judge, him 'ceitiful (*coming close to them*). Missy, dey talk too sweet, dey too lovin'. My Sambo what drib de carriage dah, him tell me how dey talk, an' I say den, too much honey. Dey say too much; don't trust 'em, my chillen, don't trust 'em.

MARIE. Maumer, I don't want to go. Aunt Ellen is very kind, but I have an exceeding dread of leaving our home. Here the very oaks which have sheltered us from infancy are dear to us; here everything loves us. I have a terror of leaving our home which seems a presentiment.

CHARLES. Sister, do not say so. All that is great and all that is heroic lies in the great world which we have never known. I long to behold the city. I want to see mankind and life. Do not fear anything, sister; I shall be with you; I will take care of you. (*While speaking CHARLES draws himself up as tall as possible, and walks with a proud and manly air*). Throw away this fearfulness; we were to go to the clerk's office to-day. Come and get ready.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Office of Clerk of Court. CLERK and lawyer FOX present. CLERK seated at a table.* FOX walking up and down.*

FOX. We are safe now, all legal forms have been complied with, and you have administered.

CLERK. All is well so far, but I can't see what has come over the Judge; he really is not safe to deal with in this matter any longer.

FOX. He is getting unfit for his position; he is too faint-hearted; he gives way to dreams and visions.

CLERK. I had to appoint a day for them to come again, when I knew that he would be absent. I think he may do very well if he don't see the girl; let him see the money only.

FOX. My idea is to get up another claimant, make out a case, and pretend to litigate it. All that time the money can be bringing us in twenty per cent. The law allows us to keep it, now we've got it.

CLERK. And without interest; that is very kind of the law.

FOX. Truly benevolent. We have the power now, and we will sell off everything.

CLERK. The orphans will cry.

FOX. Let them do so, we will leave them their tears and time to weep.

Enter MARIE and CHARLES.

FOX (*meets them and bows*). Good-morning, my young friends.

CLERK (*shaking hands*). Happy to see you; always welcome, my

* The original from whom this portrait is taken, is lame; one foot hangs useless. He moves little, then with crutches. The manager can carry out this likeness as a novelty or not, as he may choose.

children. Come always to me "when trials assail or dangers affright," but there are no troubles yet, I hope.

MARIE. Only our aunt has written from New York to desire us to come to her, and I do not wish to go.

FOX (*aside*). Convenient to us, out of our way. (*Aloud*). What an advantage it would be to you to acquire city ways and manners; to lose that air of rusticity, and acquire a high polish and style.

CLERK. I am told that the ladies in New York have manners of such perfection that when they say one thing, you may be quite sure that they mean another.

FOX. How much better than that countrified way of speaking your mind right out.

CLERK. I have heard that the fashion there is only to speak smooth things; never to say that any one has cheated, for instance, but simply that a gentleman had occasion for money.

FOX. What a delightful place to live in.

CLERK. Do not lose such a benefit, my dear young lady; the uncertainties of this life are so great.

MARIE. We will consider of it; in the meantime we need some money for household expenses, and that brother may continue at school.

CLERK. That's another thing altogether; we can not pay out money until an estate is settled.

FOX. How sudden you are, Miss Marie. Other things have intervened. Accounts have been sent in. Another claimant has appeared.

MARIE. But you must have expected to make some provision for us.

CLERK. We can not bring sentiment into business, though we regard you both as our own children.

CHARLES. You promised to consider this money as a sacred trust; to fulfil my mother's wishes.

CLERK. Those were only promises—only words.

BYSTANDER (*aside*). Only the bait until you walked into the trap.

FOX. We will have a sale of houses, farms, furniture, etc., and keep everything in our own hands until we receive the decision of the law, which is impartial.

BYSTANDER (*aside*). Leaving the poor children to do without, and the rich lawyer to make the interest. The impartial operation of the law is that the poor shall be poorer and the rich shall be richer.

MARIE. We do not wish to have a sale of our dear mother's houses and furniture; she told us to keep them.

CLERK. We can not tell, my dear young lady, to whom the law will assign the personal property of your lamented parent, nor indeed whether you will have anything to do with the estate.

MARIE. You promised to deal faithfully with us, to save us from the snares and deceits of the world, and to care for us as a father.

FOX. Could we know that another claimant was to appear?

CLERK. It is no use for you to talk ; what can you do against us ? (*To CHARLES*) Just take your sister home.

CHARLES. I promise both of you a day of reckoning when I am a man. Sister, come now, let us take time to think.

[*Exit* CHARLES and MARIE.

FOX. What fools these women are. When we can make twenty per cent. on that money, she thinks we are to hand it over to her.

CLERK. And we really do not know whose it is, or to whom the law will assign it.

FOX. And in the meantime it is ours.

CLERK. Until a decision is rendered, and the majestic progress of the law requires time.

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.—*Parlor in the Virginia home. CHARLES and MARIE present.*

CHARLES. Sister, let us go to our aun, she will love and care for us. Here we are dependent on these cruel men and they are so hard upon us.

MARIE. That Clerk of Court, who promised to be a father to us, refused even the money for household expenses.

CHARLES. And says he don't know whether we have any concern with our mother's property.

MARIE. What do you think of this other claimant ?

CHARLES. I do not believe that there is any ; I think these men are trying to take everything we have.

Enters CLARINDA.

CLARINDA. Missy, dar is strange men walkin' all roun', looking at eberything and marking down on paper. What is dat fur ? Is dey gwine to tak all missis' tings ?

MARIE. Ah ! Maum'r, I fear that they have deceived us and are going to take our home from us.

CLARINDA. Oh ! my chillen, I mistrusted dose men all de time (*twining her hands and gesticulating—walking about*). But what dey tief from us will nebber stay wid 'em. It will not profit 'em. You 'member, missy, when my brudder Jim died. His massa had gib him a cabin and an acre ob lan', and he mak' him a full title to it. Dat cabin was close jinin to dis high Judge lan'. He come da while poo' Jim was lyin' dead an' cold, an' he ax to see dat title deed. Dey showed it to him an' he took it away ; he got dat lan' sold, he turned out de famly, an' he bought it for noffin—nolfin, you might say. De night dat widow leff de house which was her own rightful home, what dey took from her, we all gathered an' we walked roun' de Judge lan', an' we cussed him at ebery corner, an' we prayed de Lord to tak' notice ob him. An' dat man is libbin to tak' our lan' an' our home too, but oh ! my chillen, if he

gwine to tak' dis lan' too, an' dis house too, we will walk roun' him agen; and we will cuss him agen, an' de Lord will some time hearken to de cry ob de poor.

MARIE (*looks shocked, rises and takes CLARINDA'S hand*). Oh! maumer, don't you know we shou'd forgive?

CLARINDA. Missy, dat do berry well for you—you always was a good chile—but for me—I am not good. I is got Ingen blood in me and I will cuss dem; don't talk to me about dem men, Miss Marie—I boun to cuss dem. (*Sobs, wringing of hands and gesticulations here take place, then her mood changes*). What you gwine to do, Miss Marie?

MARIE. Brother thinks that we should go to Aunt Ellen, she has written for us.

CLARINDA. Oh! Missy, listen to your ole maumer what nussed you and your moder before you; don't leff your home, nor Virginny, nor your only friends—yes, my chillen—M'as Charley hearken what I say—dere is upsides down in dis world, an' we dat was under your feet if you had choose to put us dere—we is now your friends and your parents an' guardians an' faithful servants all in one. Don't let 'em hab dis house, stay in it. My Jem an' my Caesar an' all ob 'em—dey will work out and bring in wages for you bofe to lib on. All we will stay wid you and sarbe you—only you stay wid us.

MARIE. My dear ole maumer, we thank you—we value your love.

Enter boy with a letter.

MARIE (*opens it—reads*).

“MY DEAR CHILDREN:—I enclose fifty dollars for travelling expenses; come to us. Do not stay to get dresses or make preparations. My heart and my house are yours. It will be my pleasure to provide everything required, only come and come at once. Love from your uncle. Affectionately, ELLEN BLOUNT.”

CHARLES. Maumer, your heart is good and kind, we will never forget you; but can't you see that Aunt Ellen is more able to keep us than you are?

CLARINDA. Wid all ie say, I mighty 'traid 'bout dat Miss Ellen. Your dear moder, when ie talk sweet words, ie eyes look right at you an' dey look same as whut ie speak, but Miss Ellen not look at you an' ie eyes look cold an' ha'ad when ie talk fair. I 'member when one day Missis was sick, she say, “Ellie dear, stay wid me an' sing to me.” “Oh! I want to walk out,” say Miss Ellen. “Well, dear, do as you like,” say Missis. So Miss Ellen ie dress up ieself an' gone to walk out on de lawn to see Mr. Blount, what was den a flyin' roun' 'em. Where ie done gone, I say to Missis, “I tink Miss Ellen might bin stay wid you, wid all you eberlastin' geein' 'em an' doin' fur 'em.” Missis say, “I rader Ellie feel free to do jest as she likes, I don't want for um to feel boun' to anythin'.” Dat de way missis alway do. Your moder lobe ebrybody an'

ebrything, but Miss Ellie, ie lobe nuffin but ieself. And now I tell you, missy, don't mind all dat holey, mind your ole maumer an' stay right here wid us. [Exit.

CHARLES. I do not like such talk from maumer.

MARIE. She is faithful and she means well. I too dread going. It seems a forewarning of some evil. We are despoiled and disinherited by those men. I know not what to do.

Re-enter CLARINDA.

CLARINDA. To see my missis' chillen go strangers into a far country—I don't know way it is—oh! stay wid yer old friens' an' sarvants, missy. [Exit.

CHARLES. Sister, do not give way to fearfulness; who ever would have effected anything if they gave way so—if they were afraid of everything. I am nearly a man (*raising himself as tall as possible and walking about*), I can take care of you, and how kindly Aunt Ellen writes. Above all, sister, it is the only thing we *can* do—we have no other resource.

(*They weep together.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A parlor in New York City.* MR. BLOUNT, *a thin, wiry, cross-looking man.* MRS. BLOUNT, *a handsome, middle-aged lady in fashionable black.* MARIE and CHARLES, *looking rather shabby.* *On the floor are two wide, low baskets, fitted with small cushions, each containing the figures of a cat and kittens.* *While speaking, MRS. BLOUNT has a kitten in her arms, caressing it and letting it crawl about her shoulders.* *An occasional interjection addressed to the kitten is intermixed with her other discourse.*

MRS. B. So your mother's property did not turn out as you expected?

MARIE. They refused to pay us any money, and said that there was another claimant.

MRS. B. How can that be?

CHARLES. There were the Probate Judge, the Clerk of Court, and Lawyer Fox; they said they could not tell who anything belonged to, and that it was against the law to pay us anything for a year.

MRS. B. Well, I can tell you that when Probate Judges and Clerks of Court get an estate into their hands they are very apt to

inherit it themselves. Oh, Dora (*to the kitten*), darling little Dora ! You need not expect to get much from them, and the sooner you make up your mind to work, the better for you.

The orphans glance at each other and retire.

[*Exit* MARIE and CHARLES.

MR. B. (*walking up and down*). What did you ever bring them here for ?

MRS. B. I thought they had a good estate, of which we might have taken charge, and I wanted a girl to help with housework and take the drudgery off my hands.

MR. B. It seems we are in a pretty situation now.

MRS. B. I told you to go to Virginia and take charge of the property. (*To the kitten*.) Oh, Dora, Dora, don't scratch aunty. If you had done as I wished, instead of that Probate Judge inheriting the estate, we might have had the use of the money and the work of the children too.

MR. B. Who could have thought that people down South could move quickly ; they were beforehand with us.

MRS. B. All we can do now is to set them to work and at least get that much benefit from them.

MR. B. I will see my friend Mr. Screw and some others, and get work for Charles ; I suppose you can provide some for Marie.

MRS. B. I suppose I can.

[*Exit* Mr. B.

A ring at the bell, and a lady enters leading with a ribbon a very small greyhound having an antique merino blanket embroidered with white silk.

MRS. B. (*advancing to meet her, still caressing the kitten*). Good-morning ; how dear and charming of you to bring Rosette. How poetical she is looking with that lovely blanket—a superlative, soulful-eyed darling ! Oh, dearie, dearie (*takes the dog into her arms, while the visitor takes the kitten*), and look at Julie ; she has three of the sweetest kittens—Sophie has four (*they turn to the other basket*), but Julie's are the prettiest. One of them is going to take a trip to New Orleans with a friend of mine—but cats are getting old-fashioned ! Now, such a living rhythm as Rosette ; she is just the style—superlative—poetical.

Enter another lady leading a small Spitz dog, having on an embroidered cream-colored blanket.

2D LADY. I have brought my Isabelle to see you.

MRS. B. Oh, the darling ! this is really a treat—lovely, *spirituelle*, in cream-colored merino—is this embroidery your own work ?

2D LADY. No, indeed ; it is as much as I can do to nurse and look after my darling's health ; her feelings are so intense that she requires all my care. I employ a lady who once belonged to our

circle—you remember the Castletons?—failed some time ago, and asked me for work. I get Isabelle's blankets embroidered by them. They are worth a dollar, but I can not offer them that, our expenses are such; they are glad to work them at twenty-five cents each.

Enter 3d LADY leading a King Charles spaniel in an æsthetic red satin blanket bordered with lace. All the ladies make a rush to meet her.

MRS. B. And you have brought Eleonora! What marvelous eyes! what wondrous hair!

1ST LADY. Look at Mrs. Blount's lovely family (*pointing to the kittens*).

3D LADY. Oh, kittens are entirely *passé*! My dear friend, why do you not get a King Charles? They alone are now *distingué*. Look at Eleonora; notice her æsthetic taste and marvelous intelligence; she knows chocolate from coffee; she knows cream from custard; chicken is the only meat that she will touch; she is aristocratic in all her tastes.

MRS. B. And you choose æsthetic colors for her.

3D LADY. Her tastes are too utterly utter for decided hues; in general she likes the subdued tints which have come to us from the mediæval ages; the only positive color which she admires is that of the sunflower.

2D LADY. I shall teach Isabelle the same antique ideas; I shall have her educated in the true cadence of colors, that she may learn to choose only those which have the true echo of a by-gone age.

MRS. B. But cream-color is in style.

1ST LADY. I shall try whether Rosette will idealize Persian pink; for myself I must own that I like something bright.

2D LADY. My Isabelle smiles with soulful eyes at me whenever I look at her.

3D LADY. My Eleonora always meets me with her intense feelings in her eyes when I return home.

1ST LADY. My Rosette can drink tea out of my cup.

MRS. B. Sophie let me handle her kittens the very first day that they appeared, though her feelings are superlatively maternal; and Julie never has her cultured mind at ease unless I have caressed hers. Thé darlings! how sweet and affectionate they always are!

1ST LADY. No crying nor pouting about them.

2D LADY. Nor howling and getting sick like infants.

During the conversation, the door having been left open, a ragged Boy of seven years, leading a girl of four, have stolen timidly into the room.

BOY. Ladies, we are left alone in the street; mother was run over and hurt; they took her to the hospital and left us helpless, as you see. A crust of bread only for this little one, please, ma'am—oh, please!

MRS. B. Half my time is taken up in driving away tramps (*gets up and stamps her foot at them*). Horrid creatures, all in rags—how did they get in?

Children kneel.

BOY. A piece of bread—oh, lady, a piece of bread only!

MRS. B. I don't believe a word you say. Go to the station; tell the police, but don't take up my parlor with your rags and dirt; how dare you come into it—go (*stamps her foot*)!

[Exit CHILDREN.]

1ST LADY. How can the creatures presume so?

MRS. B. Into my very parlor!

3D LADY. What are the police doing to allow such people about?

2D LADY. It is a settled principle of mine never to give to beggars.

1ST LADY. We are told by the papers never to do so. For my part, I wash my hands of them.

3D LADY. Let us go now and give our darlings an airing in the Park.

With boxes, courtesies, handshakings, strokings of the dogs, etc., exit visitors. MRS. B. *throws open a door, and the kitchen is disclosed to view.* MARIE *is there, a pile of dishes on a table, dish-pan, etc.*

The talk of the servants is intended to illustrate their own malicious dispositions toward MARIE, only because she is poor.

MRS. B. Now, Marie, I want you to earn your bread and leave off the indolent Southern ways in which you have been brought up. After this I shall keep but one servant, that I may be able to keep you. Here is an alarm-clock, that you may wake before sunrise; you are to call up Jane, and while she is dressing, to sweep the sidewalk; nobody will know who you are. Then you can do the marketing and help with the breakfast. Washing the dishes will be your special business; you will have to go to the door—answering the bell is enough to occupy one these times. I suppose you can do painting enough to clothe yourself and to pay the rent of your room. After lunch will come washing the dishes again; it is astonishing what a pile we do have! In the afternoon you can attend the bell while Jane takes some rest. I intend to get an Italian greyhound; sometimes Jane will have to go out with me to carry it; when that is the case you will get supper. I would take you, but you have nothing fit to wear. Calicoes and lawns might do for the wilds of Virginia, but they will not do for New York. I have to give you both a home out of charity, and you should be pleased to help all that you can. *[Exit.]*

MARIE *(ties on a colored apron, rolls up her sleeves, and puts on a pair of gloves. She then attempts to fill the large dish-pan with hot water. She is not accustomed to a sink, the water spouts out,*

and scalds her arm. *She drops the pan and begins to cry.* Oh, if I only knew how to please aunt! (*Tries again, succeeds in filling the pan, takes the mop in her hand, and begins to wash the dishes; evidently has never done it before.*)

MRS. B. *enters dressed to go out.* The contrast should be great between her rich silks and plumes and MARIE'S calico dress.

MRS. B. You are enough to try the patience of Job; gloves on to wash dishes! Take them off in no time (*stamping her foot*). You work and learn to work, or you'll find yourself outside the door, I can tell you; your uncle is complaining now of the expense he is at. Here am I giving you a home and doing all I can for you, and you putting on gloves to wash dishes—you ungrateful, idle, trifling piece; putting on gloves to wash dishes.

MARIE (*turns and faces MRS. B.*) I entered this house as your niece. I am here by invitation as your guest; you treat me as a dependent; you reduce me to the condition of a servant. I had rather work even thus, than feel indebted to you; but where is your faith, honor, and feeling, that you can act thus by me?

MRS. B. Airs and graces indeed (*in a mocking tone*). Lady Marie, attend the bell, and have those dishes done when I come in. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A large dry-goods house.* MR. SCREW, *a tall, pompous, portly man at a desk.* Enter CHARLES. *Presents a note.*

MR. SCREW (*looking at it*). From my friend Mr. Blount. So you wish to enter our service. We are one of the oldest firms in New York. The stars and stripes have had the honor to float over our house for many years past. All the monarchs of Europe would be pleased and proud to have their sons enter our service for a time (*walking up and down, with very pompous air and manner.* CHARLES *looks perfectly overwhelmed*). For a time—to learn business habits—to be trained in the solemn mysteries of our distinguished and highly-honored vocation—to amass princely fortunes, wrung by the shilling from the need of the poor. Ha! no—what was I saying? Honestly amassed by princely toil. No, hang it! that's not it. Princely fortunes amassed by honest toil—that's it. Yes, my son (*putting CHARLES on the shoulder*). Yes, my son; I place you on the high-road to a princely fortune amassed by honorable toil—that's it, now! to represent a name held in honor and revered in the palaces of the most ancient monarchs of modern times.

CHARLES *bows in assent.*

MR. SCREW (*continues*). I enroll you, my son, under the shadow of our distinguished name. Henceforth let it ever be present to your mind that you represent our house—I should say, our palace; our marble palace. For compensation, sir—though we might well

say that the honor of serving us, and of being called by our name is abundantly sufficient—yet, because we do not wish any one to serve us for naught, and because of the tender care and generosity which our magnanimous house ever shows towards its employés, we will give you two dollars a week. (*Resumes his place at the desk.*) [CHARLES bows. *Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Another part of same floor. Several young men are standing together near a window, CHARLES among them. The window should be large, and so arranged that the audience can see through it into the street. Several large boxes and packing cases conceal the young men from the sight of MR. SCREW and other authorities.*

GEORGE HILL (*who is bent, thin, partly bald, and prematurely old, is speaking*). My father died eight years ago, and I entered this house to support mother and the children. At first I had to work hard from morning till night for two dollars a week. Now I am skilled and capable. Others receive a thousand dollars a year for the same services as mine, but they know that I can not help myself, so they only give me eight dollars a week. If I left them and was two weeks getting another place, we would starve; it would break us up, for we live every week just on the wages of the last. I am prematurely aged and bald from close confinement and hard work, but I have no hope of a change, and so it goes on with us year after year.

CALDWELL (*another young man, to CHARLES*). You do not know, poor child, what you have to come to. This house has a great name and a European reputation. They always have money to head popular subscription-lists, but they consider it business to starve their employés. What do you get?

CHARLES. Two dollars a week.

CALDWELL. They know that you can not get board for less than six dollars, and you have to wear clothes. How are you to live?

CHARLES. I stay with my aunt, and we have money coming to us.

CALDWELL. Money coming to him! (*General laugh*). Who's got it?

CHARLES. The Probate Judge and Clerk of Court. (*General laugh of derision*).

CALDWELL. Well, my darling little innocent, don't look for it—don't expect it. The delight of those men is to get the money of widows and orphans into their hands, and everything that they touch sticks to their fingers. My father died ten years ago and left property. The Clerk of Court administered and died. Perhaps his children inherited; we never could recover it. Between them and this house you will find yourself ground like corn between the mill-stones.

BROWN (*another of the young men*). You have hit the idea, that's

just it; when I get out of a Sunday and only see this place, it seems to give me fits. I feel sick at the very sight of it.

JONES. Sometimes when I get off in the evening I count the delivery wagons drawn up in line, generally from thirty-seven to forty, and I say to myself, "Oh! when they are doing such a business, could they not give a poor fellow enough to pay his board? If they would only have done that, my poor mother would have been with me (*wipes his eyes*), and perhaps she would have been here now.

MRS. ARMITAGE (*from the street in a sorrowful cry; a wailing tone as she passed the window, clothed in black, and wringing her hands*). Give back my child. Oh! give—— Oh! give me back my child (*passes on out of sight*).

CHARLES. Who is that?

CALDWELL. That is the mother of a young fellow who was killed here.

CHARLES. Killed here?

CALDWELL. Only by overwork and starvation, not by knife or pistol.

JONES. *Only overwork! only starvation!*

MRS. ARMITAGE (*repasses the window*). Oh! cruel and beautiful marble palace, which lurest men into thy toils like some Circe of old! Give back my child; give back the lives which thou hast destroyed; give back my child; give back—— give back life and hope and youth to those whom thou hast rendered prematurely old; give back my child (*passes on out of sight*).

(*Looks of horror and astonishment on the faces of all the young men, CHARLES especially*).

CHARLES. How long ago was this?

JONES. About five or six months since.

CHARLES. Tell me about it.

CALDWELL. He and his mother, a widow—he was her only child—came to this city. The poor fellow thought if he could get in here he was sure of a fortune. Screw tells that to every one in turn, he was expected to live on two dollars a week, and work hard. The mother came here once or twice to get work. I heard Screw offer her handkerchiefs to paint at a dollar a dozen, and satin fans at twenty-five cents apiece. I have been told that she came here and begged Squeeze to give her son enough to board him. She said if they would do that, she could stay with him. They refused, and she had to leave him, and go back to the country. Poor George thought he could stand it, and that he would conquer Fortune for himself and for her, so he got a corner in a loft somewhere to sleep, and had next to nothing to eat. When he did go back to his mother, it was too late. Even then they refused him leave of absence, and he had to resign. People can't live on nothing, and 'tis a dangerous thing trying it.

MRS. ARMITAGE (*repasses the window, crying*). My child! my child! Give back my child.

JONES. How do they like that?

CALDWELL. I have heard it whispered that they are going to have her placed in a lunatic asylum.

GEORGE HILL. Then they will have it put in the papers that they take charge of the families of their deceased employes.

CALDWELL. And call upon the city to applaud their liberality. Let's see; I could write them up a paragraph myself. It should run like this: "Liberality of the Great House. Not only does our esteemed contemporary, successor to the *Merchant Prince*, take charge of his faithful servants during sickness, but even of their families when deceased. A junior salesman, the son of a widow, having recently departed this life, the House has voluntarily secured to his mother a comfortable maintenance for life."

JONES. I suppose they won't say where?

CALDWELL. Nor that they did it for their own sakes.

MRS. ARMITAGE (*repasses, crying*). Oh! cruel and beautiful marble palace, which luredst men into thy toils like some Circe of old; thou didst lure my Georgy from me. Give back my child, my only one; my only boy. Often have I waited for him here, and he came; yes, he came at last. Oh! Georgy, come now to thy mother. I have waited long (*passes out of sight*).

CHARLES. Why do you—any of you, stay here?

GEORGE HILL. How can we help ourselves? Those who can stand the drill here can get in elsewhere. Other merchants think that those who can please them can please anybody.

CALDWELL. We are all like moths around a candle. Each one thinks that he will get some shining prize if only he keeps on. The European buyers get \$10,000 a year, the heads of department get more.

JONES. But they have a way of sending men off just when they can't avoid giving them a salary. One may work eight or ten years, and think that they can not but increase his salary, when some morning he receives information that he is not wanted any longer; their policy is to get the work done by beginners, who will do it for almost nothing.

Enter MARIE. CHARLES goes to meet her, the others disperse.

MARIE. Oh! brother, I am turned out; my trunk is taken, and I am put outside (*she throws her arms round CHARLES' neck, and they weep together*).

CHARLES (*extricating himself*). How can that be? You were working for aunt all the time.

MARIE. She only gave me board for my work, and required me to pay the room rent myself. I had no money, so Mrs. Closefist took my trunk, and told me to go.

CHARLES. When was this?

MARIE. Just now; this morning.

CHARLES. What did aunt say?

MARIE. She said she was going into the country, and could not be troubled; that I would not work, and I might suffer for it.

CHARLES. But you did work?

MARIE (*weeping*). Yes, I did; indeed I did; my hands are blistered; see (*holds out her hands; shows that they have been bleeding*).

CHARLES. Oh! sister, I don't mind about myself, I think only of you; when I am bending over my work, I say to myself, "I can go and be a ragpicker, but what is she to do?" (*They weep together. CHARLES takes a few small coins out of his pocket, and gives them to her*). Sister, here is all the money I have; do you remember that arbor in Central Park, which we saw when we first came here?

MARIE. Yes, dearie.

CHARLES. You go there, and I will come to you. I will see aunt first, and then come.

MARIE (*takes a few steps and then returns*). Brother, do not fear for me. She said to me, "Let God help you now; see if He will provide for you."

CHARLES. And you?

MARIE. I said I am not afraid to trust Him; and even so, He will provide, be not troubled for me. (*They embrace and part*).

[*Exit MARIE.*]

Enter MRS. SCREW.

How is this, sir! What is the meaning of this? Who has been here?

CHARLES. My darling sister.

MRS. SCREW. Your darling sister? You express feelings to me, sir! What right have you to have feelings? You have been crying; what do you mean by it? No feelings, sir; no business, sir; no interest, sir. You should know nothing when once you have entered these doors, but our interest. We have bought you, sir, soul and body.

CHARLES (*aside*). If I were their bought slave and worth \$1,000 to them, they would care something about me.

SCENE IV.—MRS. BLOUNT'S *parlor*. MRS. B. and CHARLES *seated*.

CHARLES. Aunt, you invited us here; how can you let Marie be turned out?

MRS. B. Marie don't seem as if she ever would earn anything for herself. I would have boarded her for her work, but, if I have to pay room rent and clothe her, I had just as well get a servant regularly trained who can do four times the work.

CHARLES. Marie is your guest and your sister's child.

MRS. B. Mr. Blount and I worked hard for what we have, and she may work, too, or leave us. Mrs. Closefist called for her room-

rent. I told Marie at first that she had to earn money and pay that herself.

CHARLES. But how could she earn money?

MRS. B. I engaged work for her; she was to paint the cards for a state dinner. I took them myself to Mr. Ride-over-the-poor, and he rejected them altogether. He said he could get cards handsomely painted for a dollar a dozen, and he would not give anything for hers.

CHARLES. You said he had engaged them.

MRS. B. He rejected them—exposed me to the mortification after I had engaged them of having them rejected. *Think of my feelings!* When I came home Mrs. Closefist was just taking her trunk. I told her not to trouble me about it for I was going into the country. (CHARLES *sobs*.) It is different with you. Mr. Screw told me that you are doing well. He complimented *me* on your account. I think it worth while to risk money on you; don't trouble yourself about her, you can get along.

CHARLES. Excuse me, aunt; I will never give up my sister. Where she is I will be, and her portion shall be mine. I will go now to find her. (*Rises while speaking and takes his hat.*)

MRS. B. Tell her not to dare ring the bell here; Mr. Blount has taken one of his fearful dislikes to her. If ever she wants to see you, she can walk on the Square until you come out, but not dare ring the bell, for if Mr. Blount sees her, he will give her such a scare and such a cursing as I do not wish to take place in the hearing of the other lodgers.

CHARLES. We have property; we will have money to pay you; I will give my whole share to have Marie taken care of now.

MRS. B. That Probate Judge and that Clerk have your money. I don't believe you will ever get a cent, and we don't care to be troubled with her.

CHARLES. Why did you invite her here and urge her to come?

MRS. B. I thought she would take the chief trouble of house-keeping off my hands, and I thought you would, of course, have money. [Exit CHARLES, *weeping*.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An arbor in Central Park. MARIE alone. Dim form; of angels are visible, the form of her mother among them. MARIE is looking up as though praying, her hands clasped.*

MARIE. I am not alone; I know that angels are encamped around me. Mother—mother—art thou near me? Dost thou behold thy child, so tenderly guarded and fondly loved, now abandoned in this great city? Let me recall the words that once we sang together. (*Sings*.)

Daughter dear,
Daughter fair,
Peace to thy heart.

Gentle child,
Fair and mild,
Act too thy part.

Care thou not,
Fear thou not,
God shall provide.

Fatherless,
Motherless,
He is thy guide.

(*Speaks.*) Yet, alas, I am but human! The other day it seems to me that I was a child. I gathered wild flowers and violets from the wood, and played around my mother's knee. Now I am sixteen—only sixteen—and the trials of life have come upon me. And I am human—prisoned in the body. I am chill and faint and hungry. I can not commune with the spirits which surround me, but I know that they are near. I am sorrowful, but I fear not.

Enter CHARLES. They embrace. The dim forms of angels recede. CHARLES gives her bread and milk. Says:

Sister, you must be fainting; you are so pale. Were you afraid?

MARIE. No, brother; I know that angels watch over me, and you are here.

CHARLES. Always; I will come to you every night; we can stay in this arbor in warm weather, and God will take care of us.

MARIE. I know that He will; what did aunt say?

CHARLES. She said she was mortified because Mr. Ride-over-the-poor rejected your cards. She did not think of your feelings, but only that *she* was mortified.

MARIE. How can people become so selfish?

CHARLES. She told me that I had better not concern myself about you; that I could get on; that I had pleased the Great House, and that she would risk money on *me*.

MARIE. Risk money on you?

CHARLES. She meant that I could make *money*, and that you could *not*. She said you were not to dare ring the bell if you wanted to see me; that uncle would curse and scare you if you came into his sight.

MARIE (*weeping*). Oh, what have I done that I can not ring the bell at my own aunt's door—that my uncle will curse and scare me if I come into his sight. Oh, what have I done?

CHARLES. You have failed to make money, that is what you have done.

MARIE. How shall I see you, brother?

CHARLES. Rap three times on the glass beside the front-door; then walk on the Square and I will join you.

MARIE. And aunt is our own mother's sister.

CHARLES. And after grandmamma's death our mother sheltered and provided for her.

MARIE. And gave her love and welcome, which was more than all else.

CHARLES. Don't you think God will remember that Probate Judge who promised to consider our money a sacred trust, and that Clerk of Court who said he would be our father?

MARIE. Dear, evil will enter our hearts if we speak against them; let us pray God to forgive them and take care of us, for it is time now to try and sleep; you will have to rise early, and have a long day's work before you.

CHARLES. I suppose I must go to work, but I wish I could stay all the time with you.

MARIE. Let us pray now. *(They kneel. Two of the angels, one the mother, draw near and listen, pointing upward as though conveying the prayer.)* 'Oh, Father of the fatherless! Thou seest that we are strangers in a strange land, despoiled and abandoned by all who should have cared for us; our mother trusted in Thee *(the mother's spirit clasps her hands and looks up to heaven)*; do Thou give to us sleep and be our refuge forever, for the dear Lord's sake. Amen.

They rise. MARIE sits upon the bench and leans her head against the corner. CHARLES lies at length upon the seat, his head in her lap. The forms of the angels draw near and surround them. They sleep.

Enter a PARK POLICEMAN.

What have we here? These children are from the country, poor souls; here is some great trouble. *[Exit.]*

The angels recede a little. Re-enter same POLICEMAN with another.

2D POLICEMAN. Poor girl! That boy must be her brother. What shall we do? *(They join two or three other Park policemen at a little distance.)*

1ST POLICEMAN. I will take them home to my wife; she's the kindest crathur that iver came from the ould cuntry; she will keep them until we can get them a place.

2D POLICEMAN. We'll throw in and get a carriage for them, poor dears!

3D POLICEMAN. Agreed. *(They all put money in a hat.)*

1ST POLICEMAN *(goes near to wake them)*. Children, my dears, wake up. *(MARIE and CHARLES awake frightened, cling to each other, look at the policemen with terror.)*

1ST POLICEMAN (*bows, takes off his hat*). How came you here, children?

CHARLES (*rises and faces them*). My sister had no home—no—where else to sleep.

1ST POLICEMAN. Where are you from?

CHARLES. From Virginia.

1ST POLICEMAN. How did you happen to come to New York City?

CHARLES. Our mother died and our relations sent for us.

1ST POLICEMAN. You are orphans?

CHARLES. Yes, and they have taken Marie's trunk.

MARIE (*comes forward*). We thought we would lie in this little arbor and brother would bring me food every day. Please let us stay here.

1ST POLICEMAN (*wipes his eyes, goes to confer with the others, returns*). My little dears, I have a good, kind wife—a darling soul of a crathur—I will take you to her, and I will get your trunk for you, too.

CHARLES. If she had her trunk, there are silver cups, gold bracelets, and such things in it, which we could sell.

MARIE. They were mamma's.

CHARLES. Mamma would wish us to sell them if she could see us now.

Carriage appears.

1ST POLICEMAN. Come with me, children. (*Hands them into it, gets on the box.*)

Carriage drives away. The angels disappear.

2D POLICEMAN. Now, aint it strange. If our captain saw that fellow go off his beat with them babes, the stranger and the fatherless, he would fine him and maybe discharge him; but if he had clubbed 'em over the head and taken 'em to the station-house, 'twould have been all right.

3D POLICEMAN. That's the difference between divine law and human law.

4TH POLICEMAN. Think Heaven looks on such babes an' them as turned 'em out.

3D POLICEMAN. Guess sure as there be a God he do.

Re-enter 1ST POLICEMAN.

2D POLICEMAN. Did you take them children home?

1ST POLICEMAN. That I did.

3D POLICEMAN. Did yer wife tak' to 'em?

1ST POLICEMAN. She gathered that gal in her arms and kissed her like she was her darter and she hadn't seen her in a long time.

3D POLICEMAN. That's good; now we'll throw in agen for 'em. (*They put money into a hat.*)

1ST POLICEMAN. The boy was not turned out ; he has a place ; they turned out the gal only.

4TH POLICEMAN. That's worse nor all. What did they do it for ?

1ST POLICEMAN. It's beyant me to know why people does sech things, but them little 'dears told me not to say as they had any folks—that they was high people in Virginia, an' they wouldn't talk agin 'em—jist to say they was poor and not nothin' else.

3D POLICEMAN. We'll get their trunk for 'em in the morning.

4TH POLICEMAN. Yes, an' when they need it agen, we'll throw in agen,

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*A cell in the Tombs. GEORGE HILL lying on a pallet—pale and emaciated.*

Enter FRANK STUYVESANT.

FRANK S. Well, my friend, how are you ?

HILL *rises and seats himself* ; FRANK S. *sits b. side him.*

HILL. I would I were gone and done with it. When a man offends our house, he had better be dead.

FRANK S. Oh, my dear fellow, none of that—none of that. We'll see you a rising man yet.

HILL. That is what old Screw tells every one who comes in. One in five hundred maybe does rise, and that one they'll crush if they can.

FRANK S. "Don't give up the ship." Let's hear how it was.

HILL. I was cashier at eight dollars a week. Money passed through my hands all the time, while I suffered the tortures of poverty and want. At last I gave way—I did steal it. Think how manhood is dishonored by having to crawl and cringe as I have been forced to do. I was required to lie, when it was for their interest and suited them, for eight dollars a week. How could I have any shame or any manhood left ? Yet it was not for myself—I am all the support of my widowed mother and the children. It was for my sister—my mother's last little baby—that I did it. She was sick ; no money was left in the house to get coal or medicine or food. Mother asked me to get an advance—to ask Screw for an advance. Fancy it ! Screw considers it an offence to have any feelings or any relations. I took the advance myself and meant to return it. They must have been watching me. Perhaps they saw my wretched looks, divined that I was starving, and set a trap for me. They wanted an example, they said. I suppose they'll have one. Mother and the children must be starving while I am here, and I might as well go too (*rising, wringing his hands in despair*). I don't want ever to get out—I am a felon. I am not fit to speak to you—just let me perish.

Enter JUDGE TRYON, head of the great house, and MR. ROUNDABOUT.

JUDGE T. (*aside*). A lawyer here! Every rogue now who desires to cheat the gallows can get up a lawyer to help him.

The two lawyers bow ceremoniously to each other. ROUNDABOUT introduces FRANK S. to JUDGE T. HILL at entrance of JUDGE T. has thrown himself in an attitude of despair upon the pallet.

JUDGE T. (*to FRANK S.*). You surely do not intend to take up the cause of that self-convicted felon and help him to steal the property of honest men?

FRANK S. I am here, sir, to do my best for my unfortunate client, and indeed I feel deeply for him.

JUDGE T. Can he pay you any money?

FRANK S. Probably not, but I hope that you will have some mercy upon him.

JUDGE T. (*ironically*). I have mercy?

FRANK S. I trust that when you hear the circumstances you will do so.

JUDGE T. I refuse even to listen to you.

ROUNDABOUT. Sir, remember you have been a lawyer. It is our duty to listen. The law condemns no man unheard. Our rules are always to hear what our opponents have to say. (*Aside*) That is the way to trip them up—hear what they have to say.

JUDGE T. As my legal adviser says that I should listen to your statement, I reconsider my determination and consent to do so.

FRANK S. Though my client may have been faulty toward your house, yet allow me to say that he is the only hope and support of a widowed mother and her young children. They are starving while he is here. Would it not be a magnanimous and noble action to continue to them the small weekly sum which was their only support while he is confined here—at least until he is proved guilty? They are innocent, and what is eight dollars a week to you?

JUDGE T. (*choking with indignation*). Pay people to steal from me—pay people to rob me! Never—let them starve! (*To ROUNDABOUT*). Is this fellow—this consort and companion of thieves and felons—really a member of the bar?

ROUNDABOUT. Certainly, and a young man of high standing. Sir, you are going too far. Don't commit yourself. Never, never, my dear sir—never, never commit yourself.

JUDGE T. Commit myself, indeed! I will commit myself ten times over if I choose. I tell you, sir, I will commit myself. You remind me of the pettifoggers, who, when they had had the body cut up five times to their full satisfaction, refused to commit themselves that the man was dead.

HILL (*rises from his couch and approaches JUDGE TRYON*). Can

you, sir, with your uncounted millions, allow the family of an employé to starve? Suppose I am innocent. The law presumes every man innocent until he is proved guilty. Then, how would you feel if they should perish while I am here?

JUDGE TRYON. Feel—feel—I should not feel at all about it. People starve every day. What do I care?

(HILL *sinks back as if in despair*. FRANK S. *grasps his arm and sustains him*. To JUDGE T.) If you, sir, decline to do an act which would soften the inevitable severity of the law, and cover yourself with honor; if you, sir, can not see how such an act would redound to your own credit; if you refuse all pity and sympathy to those who suffer innocently, for whether my client be guilty or not, they suffer innocently; if you can lightly denounce the doom of starvation upon a widow and her children, I *can not*; though I have myself amassed but little, that little is due where innocence suffers.

JUDGE. This is paying my employés to pillage my goods; this is suborning my underlings to steal from me, and rewarding them for doing so. I shall see if an action will not lie against you, sir.

ROUNABOUT. You are committing yourself, sir. I tell you that you are committing yourself; remember what we came here for.

JUDGE (*aside*). Yes, I came here to speak to Hill fair, and get information from him; yes, I was to speak fair.

ROUNABOUT (*aside*). You have gone so far; you would commit yourself, that now you had better leave him to me. Take leave as if you were sorry.

JUDGE. I will *not* be sorry about anything. I will *not* be sorry, but I will leave him to you. (*Aside*) And I shall employ a sharper lawyer than you are; one who will not be so friendly with my enemies. [Exit.

ROUNABOUT (*approaching FRANK S. with a friendly, depreciating air and manner*). Very warm my client is; very injudicious; will commit himself; thinks he can do anything because he has money.

STUYVESANT. Enough to kill my poor young friend here; he is so weak and low already from starvation and overwork, that such a scene is enough to finish him. If he did take money, it is not a capital offense; the law does not take life for it.

ROUNABOUT. True (*feels HILL's pulse*). How are you?

HILL. I just gave up to perish; I did not expect or wish to live until my good lawyer here—I don't even know his name—has made me take heart a little.

FRANK S. My name is Frank Stuyvesant; be sure that I am a true friend to you.

HILL (*grasping his hands*). Thank you; I believe you.

Enter a TURNKEY.

FRANK S. (*to TURNKEY*). What does Mr. Hill eat?

TURNKEY. About nothing, sir; nigh about nothing.

FRANK S. Do you get for him chicken soup and port wine. (*To*

HILL). Take it for your mother and the children's sake. You will live to work for them many a day yet. I am not without influence in this our great city, which my ancestors took their share in founding. I will undertake to get you a place when you are through with this. None of us know what we would do if we were starving.

ROUNABOUT. I am commissioned to offer him favorable terms. FRANK S. Favorable terms from Judge Lyon.

ROUNABOUT. If our esteemed friend Mr. Hill will consent to render some private services in the interest of the House, he will be restored to his place, and a *nolle prosequi* be entered.

HILL. What am I expected to do?

ROUNABOUT. To keep a watch upon certain parties whom the Judge suspects; to ingratiate yourself with them, and report what you see. He knows that you acted under great pressure; that you held out long, and wished to be honest. If he can get proof against them, he will let you off.

HILL (*rising with animation*). Never! never! never will I bring upon others what I have suffered myself. I know too well the horrors of a prison and of disgrace impending over an honest name. Ingratiate myself with my comrades and inform against them? no, never, let me die first.

STUYVESANT (*shakes him by the hand*). This, our friend, is honest at heart; he is yet a man. We will bring him through.

ROUNABOUT. I will say no more to you, but when I tell the Judge that you utterly refuse his proposal, look for the worst that he can do.

FRANK S. (*to HILL*). I will stand by you.

ROUNABOUT. There is a lady, the widow of a deceased merchant prince, formerly head of the House, who is immensely wealthy, and has the heart to use her money for all who need or suffer. I am acquainted with the lady, and I will state the case to her.

FRANK S. And if you do not succeed, I am ready to do all that is needful for you (*to HILL*) and for your family.

HILL. I trust to live to show my gratitude.

FRANK S. *shakes hands with HILL and ROUNABOUT.*

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*A street in New York City, about seven in the evening.*

MARIE (*walks alone; two angels, one the mother, hover above her. They can, of course, be omitted or introduced at pleasure*). Ah! what have I done? what have I done? that I am forbidden to ring at my own aunt's door; that I can not go in and see my brother. Why did they bring us here? They must have intended me for the kitchen-girl; to be under the cook; to work without wages; to be a poor relation. Yes, a poor relation; to wear the old clothes and bear the ill humors. Below the servant! yes, she

can demand her wages; she can go away; to work three months for board, and be sent away; turned out with nothing; this it is to be a poor relation. Our dear and faithful maumer would have taken care of us; her sons would have worked for us. Oh, why did we leave them? And yet, is it I who am speaking thus? This, my complaint, shows how human and how earthly I am. I ought to know. I do know that all is well; all is well. (*She ascends the steps of a handsome house, raps three times on the glass beside the door; CHARLES comes out and joins her. They embrace, and walk in the street together.*)

CHARLES. How do they treat you, Marie?

MARIE. They are kind to me, dear, dear brother; far kinder than our own relations; they love me already. I try to help them, but I can not cook or wash. They have to hire another room for me, and they are poor (*clasping her hands*). Charley dear, I can not eat the bread of these poor people. I must get work that I can do. I am going to take a situation as nursery governess, and I came, dearie, to tell you good-bye. I don't know if you can come and see me.

CHARLES. Oh! sister, you have not deserved this; how can I see you in the position of a servant? Our dying mother prayed God to take care of us, and has it come to this?

MARIE. God will take care of us, dear brother; let us do our best and trust in Him. I shall give thanks every day, that I can earn my living, and see you sometimes. Won't you come and see me?

CHARLES. Yes, I will come, and it is better than being dependent; but how can you get such a place?

MARIE. The good Jeannette has secured it for me; all will be well, brother.

(*They pass on out of sight.*)

SCENE IV.—*From the previous scene doors open and disclose the interior of a room within. MRS. BLOUNT is sitting on a sofa; JANE, the servant-girl, is applying cold water to her head and face. Another servant-girl and a laundress are standing by looking frightened.*

MRS. BLOUNT (*gasps out*). I saw my sister; indeed, I saw her.

JANE. Oh! no, ma'am, 'tis too tinder-hearted ye are intirely; 'tis yer good feelings overpowered ye.

MRS. B. She looked at me and raised her hand, it seemed in warning or reproach. She may well reproach me.

JANE. Indade, ma'am, ye've not been the same since that little minx left yer door.

MRS. B. She is my sister's child.

JANE. Och, ma'am, don't let the master hear ye.

MRS. B. And my sister sheltered me in her home when I was an orphan.

JANE. Och, ma'am, ye've got the blue rapoues, will I be afther sindin' for the dochter?

MRS. B. Where was my heart? where were my feelings, that it could come to this?

JANE. Sure, ma'am, she was a troublesome cratur. She didn't know how to do nuthin'.

2d SERVANT. And poor, ma'am; so poor she didn't have one dollar; not one dollar, ma'am.

JANE. And shabby, ma'am. Barbara here (*pointing to the laundress*). Barbara was above the doin' of sich dresses.

BARBARA. Caliker, ma'am. Caliker and print like she had, come out of the backwoods.

MRS. B. I promised to provide her. Oh! why does not conscience warn us in time. She keeps all her scorpion stings until it is too late! too late! too late!

BARBARA. Lor', ma'am, 'tis a common case wid poor relations. I has known people to bring 'em here before, and they has no sinsibility and no gratefulness; mostly they has to sind 'em back where they come from, and no fuss about it. Let 'em go, ma'am, and say, "Joy go wid 'em."

MRS. B. (*Her manner should show that she is quite unmindful of what the servants say. She listens to her conscience; to the inward tumult only*). My conscience did speak, but it was a still small voice, and I drowned it in worldliness. I would not hear; now I deserve to feel her lash. Oh! sister, sister (*fixing her eyes on a corner of the apartment where a dim ghostly outline may be seen; goes into hysterics. The servants shrink back in astonishment and horror*).

Enter MR. BLOUNT.

MR. B. What is all this?

JANE. The mistress has seen her sister.

MR. B. What of that?

JANE. Her dead sister.

MR. B. She has? (*looks startled*).

MRS. B. You tempted me.

MR. B. Not I; you acted for yourself.

MRS. B. You spoke against that child from the day you knew that she had no money.

MR. B. You need not blame me; you are not a character very easily influenced by anybody.

MRS. B. You aggravated me all that you could.

MR. B. You, yourself, of your own heart, grudged your sister's child her food from the first; had she been my sister's child, she should not have gone.

MRS. B. And why is your sister's child different from mine?

MR. B. Because, though a man, I would have had some natural feeling for my own flesh and blood; you had none. If you had cared half as much for her as for those vile cats and dogs, she would have been here now.

MRS. B. From the time I married you, you have made me grow worse, and now you reproach me.

MR. B. Bad as I am, and I don't pretend to be good, the dead sister's face sometimes rises before me, just as she looked when, on your bridal morning, she clasped your veil with her own circlet of pearls.

MRS. B. (*sobbing and shrieking again*). Yes, it was so, but you made me; you used to tell me that if only they were all dead everything would be ours. Leave me; go from me. I have often told you to go.

MR. B. I did go, and like a fool I came back. I know I am bad; that is a man's privilege; he can come right out and be bad and take the consequences; but a woman—there should be some feeling left in a woman.

MRS. B. Is there a different law for men and women?

MR. B. If there is not, there should be; to see a woman like you—if she had been my sister's child I would have begged for her before she should have been abandoned in this city. Bad as I am I have some feeling.

MRS. B. (*still sobbing hysterically*). You urged me on; you made me.

MR. B. You are not in general so wonderfully obedient to me; if you had had natural feelings that would have restrained you. (*To JANE*). Take care of your mistress; when I see such storms invade the sacred precincts of my home (*spoken ironically*), I have a refuge prepared. I shall dine at the club.

[*Exit.*]

CURTAIN.

SCENE V.—*Part of Union Square. MARIE is rolling a baby in its carriage; three or four boys are playing around her.*

Enter FRANK STUYVESANT.

FRANK S. Let me roll the carriage.

MARIE. No, Mr. Stuyvesant, what would your mother say to your doing my work?

FRANK S. (*They stand under a shade*). Marie, you are a very strange girl; you sing and you paint, you have read history and you speak French, yet you hire out for a nursing-maid. You do not belong to this place either. Won't you tell me how all this is?

MARIE. I have come from a home in the country, where the birds sing, the grass grows green, and the flowers bloom nearly all the year.

FRANK S. And why have you left it?

MARIE. Our dear mother died; the Clerk of Court took everything that we had, so we had to come here.

FRANK S. Who besides yourself?

MARIE. My younger brother Charles.

FRANK S. And why does he not come to see you?

MARIE. I am afraid that your mother would not like it.

FRANK S. And you wish to see him?

MARIE. Mrs. Stuyvesant told me that she did not allow any followers, but I am free Sunday afternoons to go to church, and then I see him.

FRANK S. He is not a follower—don't you know what a follower is?

MARIE. Some one said a visitor.

FRANK S. Your brother is not a follower—I look much more like a follower (*in a joking, teasing tone*).

MARIE. Oh! Mr. Stuyvesant, please do not speak to me, nor come near me. I like you—but I remember now Charlie told me not to speak to, nor make acquaintance with, any gentleman.

FRANK S. But you did not make my acquaintance, I made yours. I came into the nursery and insisted on superintending your management of my infant brothers and sisters.

MARIE. That was very good of you—you were a great help to me then.

FRANK S. (*same joking yet tender manner*). I take an uncommon interest in the progress of the children.

MARIE (*not understanding any admiration of herself*). Of course, what else should an elder brother do?

FRANK S. I never took so much interest before.

MARIE. Do you think then that I manage them well?

FRANK S. Wonderfully—the very pap-boat has become interesting to me. I had rather hear you sing while you rock the cradle, than Jenny Lind if she came out again.

MARIE. Indeed—do you think I sing well?

FRANK S. Much better than Jenny Lind.

MARIE (*looking down, clasping her hands—a motion natural to her*). Do not laugh at me.

FRANK S. (*in an impressive, marked manner*). In truth—I think so (*smiling down upon her*).

MARIE (*with a little assumption of dignity and reproof*). Mr. Stuyvesant, I would like you so much if you would not laugh at me.

FRANK S. If the papa knew that, they would be done with you instant.

MARIE. Why?

FRANK S. You are so dangerous.

MARIE. How can I be dangerous?

FRANK S. You are innocent and gentle, young and fair, unknown and portionless

MARIE (*astonished*). How is that dangerous?

FRANK S. I can tell you the fact, but I can not supply comprehension—don't ask me; but if they knew I looked at you three times, they would have no more use for you.

MARIE. Then don't look at me—oh! never speak to me (*clasping her hands and looking up into his face*). Oh! dear Mr. Stuyvesant, please go away and never speak to me.

FRANK S. Won't you tolerate me just a little?

MARIE. I am so proud and so pleased that I can earn my own living and in such a pleasant way—for I love little children—I love to take care of them; but you are not in my charge—I have not the care of you (*looking clear up to him; there should, if possible, be a great difference in height*), but only of the little ones, so don't speak to me—you must mind what your mother says.

MRS. ARMITAGE (*approaches, to FRANK*). Will you please to tell me if you have seen my son—my Georgy?

FRANK S. (*with a respectful, sympathizing manner*). How shall I know him, ma'am, that I may be able to inform you?

MRS. ARMITAGE. He is a young fair boy—yet taller than I am; he is my only son. I have often walked the square and watched and waited and he came to me.

MARIE *listens with a surprised, interested look.*

FRANK S. Where do you think that I can find him, ma'am?

MRS. A. At the Great House—that great palace (*pointing to some object in the distance—down from Union Square*); he said he would make a fortune there, and he told me when I wanted to see him to walk up and down until he came to me—but, oh! he comes not (*breaks into the same sorrowful cry*). Oh! give me back my child. Oh! cruel and beautiful marble palace, give back youth and hope to those whom thou hast rendered prematurely old—give back my child—my child—my Georgy.

MARIE *has taken the baby in her arms, and is clinging to FRANK'S arm.*

MARIE. My brother works in that Great House, ma'am; rest yourself—try to sleep—I will ask where he is.

MRS. A. Your voice is sweet to me, and your looks are kindly, but oh! I can not sleep—there is no sleep for me any more.

FRANK S. Let me take you home, and we will try to find your son.

MRS. A. (*goes close to MARIE and looks in her face*). Fair girl, you love your brother. Oh! let me warn you—that marble palace doth bewitch the hearts of men with tales of fortune and of grandeur, like some fabled siren, and when she hath lured them into her toils, hope and youth and love go from them, and sometimes they are seen no more. I watch and wait, but he comes not—I call and I cry aloud, but she has a marble heart, she gives not back my child.

FRANK S. (*draws her arm within his, and leads her gently away, saying*). Let me assist you, ma'am.

[MRS. A. and FRANK *Exit*.]

CURTAIN.

SCENE VI.—*A handsome parlor in a certain white marble palace.*

A LADY in widow's mourning, seated. A SERVANT presents a card on a silver waiter.

LADY. Ask him to walk in.

Enter ROUNDABOUT.

ROUNDABOUT (*bows profoundly*). Madam, you desired me some time since to bring to your knowledge any case of distress which might become known to me among the employés of the house.

LADY. I shall thank you for doing so—shall consider it a favor done to myself.

ROUNDABOUT. It is a great pleasure to me, for sometimes it is our duty to prosecute where our hearts and feelings sympathize.

LADY. A case of crime?

ROUND. I fear that it is, madam; but while the party who is supposed to be guilty lies in prison, his family, who are certainly innocent, starve. For them I desire to invoke your compassion.

LADY. It is granted before it is asked.

ROUND. Nay, honored lady, let me tell you—it is right that you should know the circumstances.

LADY *bows assent*.

ROUND. Did you hear Judge Tryon say that the cashier had been guilty of a defalcation—a small amount?

LADY. I think I heard something about it.

ROUND. He is the eldest son of a widow; his mother and a family of children are all dependent upon him. It seems that a little girl was sick; fuel, food, and medicine—all were wanting. His mother desired him to ask an advance. He considered it useless to do so, and took it himself. He says that he intended to return it. He is in prison, so heart-broken, sick, and weak from previous hard work and starvation that he is in need of nourishing food and wine to keep life in him; while his family, who depended upon his wages, are utterly destitute.

LADY. What does the Judge say?

ROUND. Judge Tryon thinks that he ought to be made an example.

LADY (*shudders, takes out her purse*). How much ought I to send?

ROUND. (*musingly*). Eight dollars a week to the family—food and wine to him. (*Appears to calculate.*)

LADY. Here is a hundred-dollar note; when that is gone, call on me for more.

ROUND. (*rising*). I must give thanks in Hill's name.

LADY. Stay—are you his lawyer?

ROUND. I am employed by the Judge.

LADY. To prosecute?

ROUND. Even so. You will not let him know that I have spoken to you.

LADY. I honor your kindness of heart. I do not wish him to know that I send money. Let him know nothing.

ROUND. He shall know nothing from me. (*Boxes low.*)

{*Exit.*

LADY (*walking slowly to and fro, speaks to herself*). I suppose others think that I am at the summit of human felicity. Ah! I am so poor—so poor in all that makes life worth the living. Youth and love—they are riches; age and money are but poverty twice told. This vaunted wealth—what can it do for me? Can it prolong life? Can it restore youth or drive away death? Ah! if children and grandchildren pressed around me and lisped my name in loving accents—that were wealth; to dwell alone and unloved—that is poverty, poverty indeed. Never had I the heart or soul to be satisfied with money. Oh, for one faithful friend who would love me for myself only! but that is not given me. Who will weep when I am dead?—I know not; and who will smile?—many,—many, I suppose, for each will think—maybe there is a legacy for me. I dwell in frigid grandeur; I can drive out and see my own tomb when I like—and I wonder if even there I shall be suffered to repose. “Vanity of vanities,” saith the wise man. Even in the tomb which we have built, we know not whether we shall be allowed to rest. One certainty alone remains to me—I can do good to the sorrowful and comfort the poor. Yes, I will rejoice to do that—I will not listen to the Judge, who talks ever of money—money—money. Can he live on money?—can he eat money?—can he wear money?—and oh! can he carry money with him to that narrow home which is built already for me? Yet one thing remains to ease my bursting heart. I can take of the dross which surrounds me, and, by the only true alchemy, I can convert it into enduring treasure by comforting those who mourn. I will assume the dress of a Sister of Charity, and visit that poor prisoner. Perhaps in giving myself to the good of others, I may in that disguise find some simple, lowly soul whose love I may gain—I, who am so poor, so poor. Yes, as a Sister of Charity I will go. Thus I may find love here and riches that I can carry with me through and beyond that narrow home, and even into the eternal mansions beyond.

(*Passes out of sight.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Court room. JUDGE upon the Bench. GEORGE HILL as prisoner, his mother and three children beside him. SHARPE, the prosecuting attorney, is speaking. ROUNDABOUT sits beside him (SHARPE). FRANK STUYVESANT is counsel for the prisoner. Officers, etc., arranged as in a Court room.*

SHARPE. Behold his villainous countenance, his bent form, his prematurely aged look—all proclaim his treachery. Succored in

the hour of need, trusted, placed in a responsible position by the magnanimous House which we have the honor to represent, like the viper, he takes the first opportunity to turn and sting the hand which warmed him. (MRS. HILL *weeps, the children cling around her and weep with her; prisoner bows his head upon his hands, concealing his face.*)

SHARPE (*continuing*). What shall become of the commercial honesty and honor of our country? Where shall Columbia hide her head, discrowned and dishonored, should such a villain be permitted to go forth unpunished? Contrast with his shameful career, that of our distinguished fellow-citizen, Judge Tryon, the brilliant example of honor and integrity. Remember the illustrious merchant prince who laid the foundation of the honored and honorable firm which has become celebrated throughout the civilized world. Laws are made to guard the fortunes of such men. Where property is insecure, the whole social fabric totters. I call upon you, then, gentlemen of the jury, in the name of our country, for the sake of the stars and stripes which wave over us; in the name of honor and honesty, of law and of virtue, to pronounce a verdict which shall save us from the future treachery of such villains.

(*Slight murmurs of applause.*)

JUDGE TRYON (*rises*). I consider it necessary to the future welfare and prosperity of our house that an example should now be made. I demand that the utmost penalty of the law should be inflicted, that our other employes may be deterred from such daring fraud and speculation as has been proved against the prisoner.

FRANK STUYVESANT (*rises*). You see before you, gentlemen of the jury, in the person of my unfortunate client, one whom sorrow and misfortune have pursued almost from the cradle. Melancholy seems to have marked him for her own. But it is not villainy or treachery which have written their lines upon his countenance and made him, as our learned opponent has remarked, prematurely aged and bent. No, gentlemen of the jury, it is toil, privation, and labor from a too early age which have stamped their impress upon his form and upon his face. My friends, we are all human; though our learned brother and his client may have hearts as well as palaces of marble—we have not. Who can say what the pangs of starvation may do with him? Who shall say, I will suffer toil and privation—I will starve and die, and do no wrong to save myself and the helpless ones, dearer than life—more precious than self, who suffer and die with me. To those who are human—to those who have hearts of flesh, I appeal. My friends, does the tutelary genius of our beloved country—does Columbia mourn—do the stars upon our banner fade or pale because we are not all endowed with the endurance of heroes and of martyrs? The spirit of heroism and martyrdom, I might say, is not given to all; but hear me, friends, and you shall judge whether somewhat of that

spirit has not been shown by this child of sorrow, though he has come short of that illuminated standard in one instance. Listen to his story. Some years ago his father died, leaving a widow and seven children. My client is the eldest; he was then sixteen years of age. "Mother," he said, "fear nothing, I am now almost a man; I consecrate my life to your service. I will face the world for you and for the children; I am brave and strong, I have hope and youth and enthusiasm. I go forth like some knight of old to do my *dévoir* for those who are so dear to me." And so he entered the Great House. He was diligent and faithful, and he rose to the position of Cashier. But flesh is flesh, my friends—we are human, we are not marble; the pittance was so small and the toil and responsibility were so hard that one by one, hope, youth and enthusiasm left him as the bereaved widow who has been heard to cry in vain in our streets, too truly says, the marble palace gives not back hope and youth to those whom she has rendered prematurely old—these were gone, his form was prematurely bent, and his countenance early aged, yet duty and endurance remained. Midnight toil, privation, and responsibility are what my learned opponent and his client call treachery and villainy. He became cashier at eight dollars a week—yes, the man who has brought him here to-day—revelling himself in the possession of uncounted millions, *very easily gained*—allowed to this intelligent, young man, knowing how many were dependent upon him, eight dollars a week. Still he struggled and still he was faithful, but sickness entered his home; the little sister, the pet and darling of all, was taken ill; the small allowance, already so straitened, was soon exhausted. His mother desired him to ask an advance; he believed it useless to ask—useless to state the circumstances in which he was placed. Under such pressure—in such need—for his mother's sake—he advanced himself one week's salary. He had, it seems, already been watched. His haggard looks caused him to be suspected; all that he could say was vain, for that wealthy firm still had need of the fatherless and friendless youth for an example—an example—that he may be sacrificed as an offering to their pride and grandeur. And I fear, my friends, that whatever may be your decision, they will be gratified, and he will indeed be an example. Look upon that wasted cheek and hollow eye; it may be that the hour comes when that mother will be deprived of her protector and her stay—those little ones of their second father. Then may Columbia mourn indeed, then may the stars and stripes grow pale, when life can be crushed from the youth of our country by such grinding and such oppression.

FRANK STUYVESANT *takes his seat amid cheers and applause from the spectators.*

JUDGE TRYON (*rises*). I repeat, gentlemen of the jury, that I demand an example. This young man has stolen our money, and in the name of honesty and common sense, I say I trust that

you will disregard all these flowers of rhetoric, and make an example of that felon. (*Takes his seat amid muttered groans and hisses.*)

(*The JUDGE upon the bench delivers his charge.*) My duty is to represent to you, gentlemen of the jury, that in spite of the touching picture which Mr. Stuyvesant has drawn, the plain fact remains of the evidence which you have heard. Your duty is simply, and only to pronounce whether you consider him guilty or not guilty.

(*The jury appear to consult, foreman gives the verdict.*) Guilty, but recommended to mercy.

JUDGE. Stand up, George Hill, and receive your sentence. We feel for the trying position in which you have been placed: we appreciate your efforts to do the duty of a son, but the majesty of the law must be vindicated. With a sorrowful heart, and deeply sensible of the painful duty imposed upon me, I therefore give sentence that you remain six months in the penitentiary without labor, which is the lightest sentence in my power to impose.

GEORGE HILL. Oh! my mother!

JUDGE TRYON. That sentence does not make an example. I have said that I demand the full penalty of the law. I demand that he be made an example.

FRANK S. Look upon his countenance—look upon the anguish which sways his frame—look upon that widowed mother and her children. George Hill has lost in your service youth, hope, enthusiasm, health, and honor—is it your desire that he shall lose his life also? Are you not a man? Have you not the common feelings of humanity?

(*Applause.*)

JUDGE TRYON. Stuff—stuff and nonsense—sympathy with a thief.

LADY (*disguised as a Sister of Charity*) has entered the Court Room just as the sentence has been pronounced, sits beside MRS. HILL, takes her hand—endeavors to console her and the prisoner, accompanies them to a hall which opens from the Court Room. The officers in charge conduct GEORGE HILL there—the others follow.

SCENE II.—*A small room or hall adjoining the court-room. Enter an officer conducting the prisoner. His mother and the children follow, also LADY disguised as a Sister of Charity, and FRANK STUYVESANT. The prisoner appears overwhelmed with grief and shame.*

LADY (*advances to him and takes his hand*). You know my real name. Trust your mother to me (*laying her hand on hers*). She shall be my special care; and for you, tell me what I can do?

HILL (*standing upright, appearing more hopeful*). Madam, I am deeply grateful to you; believe me, that I am not at heart a thief or a felon. In my intention that money was only an advance. I should have returned it.

LADY (*hands him a roll of small notes*). I wish you to have every comfort. I shall care for your mother.

HILL. May the God of the widow bless you, madam (*selects some notes and hands them to FRANK S.*) Will you hand these to Judge Tryon, and say that I intended to make the amount good, and that I pray he may never be exposed to the same temptation. For yourself, sir, how much will you accept?

FRANK S. Nothing; nothing. I go to fulfill your commission.

[*Exit.*]

HILL. And remorse is added to my sorrow. Oh! that I had resisted temptation. If only I had not yielded, I could now feel like a man; I would not be utterly crushed and disgraced as I am; but I feel that Mrs. Stuyvesant is right. I shall not be here long; and you, honored lady, to you I leave my mother and the little ones (*draws them forward and presents them to the LADY*).

LADY. I shall make it my first care to settle an annuity upon your mother, but you will recover when your mind is easy. You will be spared to your mother, for you have been a dutiful son. I often told my late husband that he ought to give his employés enough to live on. I always said so. Alas! we women feel where the right is. We are wiser than men in those things, but they disregard what we can say, and call it sentiment. Oh! could I but undo all that has been done (*raising her hands and eyes to heaven*).

HILL. Madam, I shall pray hourly for you; farewell (*he bows low; she extends her hand, and he kisses it*).

MRS. HILL. The blessing of we who were ready to perish, surround and rest upon you.

LADY. I am thankful that I can——

OFFICER. We must go.

CURTAIN.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A handsome parlor or bedroom in MRS. STUYVESANT'S house. A large mirror in the room, and a boulevard opening from it. MRS. STUYVESANT is standing before the glass. MME. MANTEAU, a dress-maker, and MAD'LE FANDANGO, a milliner, are present. A jeweler's clerk is near a distant table, with some jewelry displayed. Dresses, bonnets, laces, and silks are lying about on chairs and tables.*

MME. MANTEAU. Madam, the fit is perfect; you look a Juno. (*To MME. FANDANGO*). Is not madam absolutely angelic?

Mlle. FANDANGO. *Milady* looks well in anything, her contour sets off the dress; but with this bonnet, the *chef d'œuvre* of Mme. de Fleuzel, then she will look angelic. *Milady* is like *la pauvre Impératrice Eugénie*. She recalls to me that lovely lady when she was empress. (*While speaking she places a bonnet on the head of* MRS. STUYVESANT). Look now *c'est une couronne*, 'tis a crown to her beauty (*the bonnet should have a coronet of golden flowers and wheat*). Now she looks angelic.

MME. MANTEAU. And when did ever you see the empress Eugénie?

Mlle. FANDANGO. My Mme. De Fleuzel and I made the bonnets of the empress, when she was empress (MRS. STUYVESANT turns round and looks at the two).

MME. MANTEAU. Ah! madam, *pardonnez-moi*. Will madam try another dress?

MRS. S. As this one fits so well, you can make the others by it.

MME. MANTEAU. Madam's figure is so perfect, I have only ask the designer whom we employ to give me actually perfect proportions, and madam is fitted.

Mlle. FANDANGO. It is our style in a bonnet which makes her so lovely. Will *milady* (*bowing low*) try on more bonnets?

MRS. S. A bonnet to suit each dress.

MME. MANTEAU. We have an antique brocade to make over, by Monsieur's orders; he says that the lady of the high and mighty excellency Pietro Stuyvesant, the first governor, wore it at a New Year reception.

MRS. S. (*smiling*). So she did; and, when she took it off, it could stand alone.

MME. MANTEAU. Ah, madame, they do not make such silks now. Shall I trim it with the same *point de Venise* which she wore with it?

MRS. S. Certainly; all to suit.

MME. MANTEAU. Your arms are so beautiful, I think I shall give you short sleeves.

MRS. S. Perhaps Mr. S. may not like that.

MME. MANTEAU and Mlle. FANDANGO (*in chorus*). Oh, *milady*, *c'est passé*—'tis old-fashioned to mind what the husband, Monsieur le Mari, says. Let him be *un peu jaloux*—a little jealous—so much the better; he will admire *milady* the more.

MME. MANTEAU. I have improvised a style for this toilet which shows all the beauty of the neck; the pearly-white shoulders should just appear, while a caprice covers the collar-bone.

Mlle. FANDANGO. Madame will look like a young belle just presented.

MRS. S. I am old-fashioned enough to have it as Mr. Stuyvesant likes.

MME. MANTEAU. Oh, madame, he will never want it in style.

THE JEWELER'S CLERK (*comes forward*). By Mr. Stuyvesant's orders I have reset the diamonds of the lady, and a miniature of the governor, to be worn with the dress.

MRS. S. The same miniature which she used to wear around her neck?

CLERK. The same, madam.

MME. MANTEAU and MILE. FANDANGO (*in chorus*). *C'est charmant.* Milady *may* like such a Monsieur le Mari as that! To think of a husband doing such a thing!

Enter FRANK S. Looks disappointed. Walks up and down uneasily. Aside.

Can a woman disregard her laces and flowers? If there be a woman who can do so, it is my mamma.

MRS. S. Do you want to speak to me, Frank?

FRANK S. When you are at leisure, mamma.

MME. MANTEAU. Surely Monsieur is Madame's step-son?

MILE. FANDANGO. Does milady look like the mother of such a tall young gentleman?

MRS. S. My son, you are troubled. (*To MME. M. and MILE. F.*) You will please return at this time to-morrow.

They and the CLERK gather up their wares and leave, looking disappointed. Some silks, laces, ribbons, flowers, etc., are left about the room. MRS. S. eats herself, with FRANK beside her. He kisses her hand respectfully.

FRANK. You who gave me life and made my childhood happy, will you give to my manhood love and happiness also?

MRS. S. (*looking surprised*). How can I do that, my son?

FRANK. Mother, I have formed an attachment—the love of my life. I feel that I shall know no other—will you smile upon it, and will you reconcile papa?

MRS. S. Tell me about it, my dear; my only wish is to see you happy.

FRANK (*takes her hand*). Mother, I fear that I shall startle you; but promise me this—that at least you will not act against me.

MRS. S. My son, you frighten me. How can you suppose that I would act against you?

FRANK. Mother, can you rise above the prejudices of the world?

MRS. S. Speak out, my dear; do not keep me in suspense.

FRANK. At least promise me that if you refuse my request, you will not alter your conduct to any person in any way on account of what I tell you.

MRS. S. (*turns and looks FRANK in the face*). I do not understand.

FRANK (*speaking slowly and impressively*). I wish to place a confidence in you which few young men are happy enough to place in a mother.

MRS. S. I appreciate it, my son.

FRANK. But I have no right to peril the welfare of another per-

son. I wish you to promise that in any case—should you disapprove—that you will not change your conduct to any one in consequence of what I tell you.

MRS. S. (*looking him in the face*). I trust you, my son, and I promise.

FRANK. Then hear me. Your little nursemaid Marie is no common servant. She is of a good Virginia family, reared in comfort and ease, educated and refined—a young lady lovelier in mind and character than any of the wealthy daughters of Fortune with whom sometimes I am called to associate. In short, mother, I love her—I love her so honorably and truly that I ask for her my mother's protection, care, and love.

MRS. S. Dear Frank, I have only noticed her as a nursery governess; she is devoted and faithful, but I viewed her in no other light.

FRANK. Mother, in her calico dress, without any of the gauds of fashion, like a rare and precious flower cast by the wayside, I saw in her the ideal of my soul, the counterpart which I might vainly have sought throughout the world. I saw it the first time that I met her.

MRS. S. Tell me, Frank, how you know anything about her?

FRANK. A true love like mine can see through the outer garb and reveal the princess in the servant-maid.

MRS. S. Has she encouraged you?

FRANK. I have not sought her until I can first obtain for her my mother's protection.

MRS. S. Tell me all that you have learned about her.

FRANK. Her parents owned considerable property in Virginia; her mother died some months since. The Clerk of Court, Probate Judge, and their lawyer took possession of the property, and denied the minor children any share in it; she and her brother came to an aunt in this city. When the aunt found that their money was gone, she disowned them; Marie sought employment and became your nursemaid. Mother, as you value my happiness, take her for your daughter, and such I trust she will in time become.

MRS. S. I will speak to her and notice her. If I find her what you think, I will be a parent to her.

FRANK. What a noble mother I have.

MRS. S. (*smiling*). Don't you think you have only gone wild?

FRANK. No, mamma. Love, like the spear of Ithuriel, penetrates through all disguises. I saw in her, at once, the innocent maiden and the refined lady.

MRS. S. What will your father say, Frank?

FRANK. I trust to you to reconcile him.

MRS. S. When have you seen Marie?

FRANK. Just now I passed through the nursery. She was sitting on the floor trying to put on Jack's shoes. He was fighting and kicking at her. I looked and waited—I have some sense left—to see what she would do. "I will sing for you," she said, and

she soothed the little savage with such sweetness as an angel might show. Yet I saw her weep, and I could not bear it. As I came to you with my childish sorrows—I still remember how, when I fell down, you kissed the knee to make it well—so I come to you now; and oh! my mother, again you make me well—you heal my heart wounds this time.

MRS. S. Dear boy, I have not forgotten my youth. I knew a lady who destroyed the happiness of her son's life to gratify her own pride. She separated him from his early love because she had not high family; she never could repair it; she persuaded him to marry, but she could not give him love again. I have often determined that I would never so destroy my children's happiness.

FRANK. My beloved friend,

MRS. S. If all sons would but confide in their mothers.

FRANK. If all mothers would so win and deserve their sons' confidence. See her now; and oh! mamma, get her some gewgaws—some laces and ribbons, etc. (*pointing to those still scattered about the room*).

MRS. S. (*sighing*). You go and mind the children, and send her to me.

[*Exit FRANK.*]

Enter MARIE.

MRS. S. Come and sit beside me. (*Takes her hand and looks at it.*) You have not been accustomed to work?

MARIE. No, ma'am, not until of late.

MRS. S. I have heard your story. Suppose I take you for my daughter—I have only boys, and no girl; do you think you could love me?

MARIE. I love you already, ma'am. I love the children, and I am thankful that I can earn my living.

MRS. S. But if I take you for my daughter, you need not work.

MARIE. Dear lady, I am happier to render some return. Let me mind the children and love you, too.

MRS. S. I will get a girl to help you, and have you for my daughter (*kisses her*), and you must have some dresses and some laces.

MARIE. Dear lady, not until I earn them.

MRS. S. Some salary is due you now; will you trust me to lay it out for you?

MARIE. Most gratefully.

MRS. S. I will send for your brother to see you to-day.

MARIE. Thanks, dear madam.

[*Exit.*]

Enter FRANK.

MRS. S. I can see the lady in her. Young as she is, she had the intuitive instinct not to become a mere dependent. As my mother used to say:

“For, by a pure and perfect instinct taught,
A lady can not act but as she ought.”

Your love has not led you astray, my son.

FRANK. What will papa say about it?

MRS. S. Your papa has a great deal of chivalry and tenderness in his nature, though he appears so proud and lofty; but he must be managed aright. I will interest him for her. I will bring her in the parlor, and let her tell him her story. All will be well—leave me to manage him. (FRANK *kisses his mother's hand.*)

FRANK. Would that all men were in such leading-strings.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—MRS. STUVVESANT'S *parlor (this can be the same as in the previous scene), opening into a conservatory, in which are varied flowers in bloom.*

MARIE (*stands looking at the flowers. She is dressed in lilac silk and white lace, white rosebuds are in her hair and corsage. On her arm hangs a large, flat white straw hat, also trimmed with white rosebuds. In her hand is a half-blown pink rose. She speaks to herself.*) And has brightness come into my life? Am I to wear flowers? For a long time it seemed as though mourning only would be my portion. Are pink flowers indeed for me? Is love for me? Oh! sweet flowers—harbingers of summer days—speaking of love and of brightness to the poor orphan. Come to my heart, I will cherish you there. I accept you as a token that happy days shall come again to Marie. He told me once that a pink rosebud was the emblem of a dawning love; next day he gave me one, and now he has sent me this half-blown rose. Does he indeed mean love—pure love—the one wreath of Paradise bloom which brightens this dark world of ours? He would not deceive Marie. (*Sings.*)

“Oh, no! I trust him; on his brow
Are Faith and Honor 'throned;
I never shall believe him false,
Or of his truth uncrowned.”

(*Speaks.*) Yes, I believe him; and, oh! I have given him love in return. He has taught me to love; he has awakened the feeling in my bosom. (*Casps both her hands over her heart.*) How kind and generous they all are. His father treats me, a poor orphan, with all the respect and chivalry which one of Froissart's knightly heroes might show to a princess, and he—he behaves as though I were his queen. When I was abandoned by all the world, and had not where to lay my head, I said to brother then: All is well. I can look back now, and say, I have trusted in God. As I said then, I say now, I fear not (*clasping her hands*). And true love is a gift which He alone can give. The world can not confer it, wealth can not buy it. (*Sings.*)

“Oh, Love that sweetens sugarless tea,
And makes contentment and joy agree
With the coarsest boarding and bedding;

Love that no golden ties can attach,
But nestles under the humblest thatch,
And will fly away from an Emperor's match
To dance at a penny wedding."

(While MARIE sings, FRANK enters unperceived, and stands looking at her with delight in his countenance. She walks about and speaks absently). He taught me to feel it. Lately I was a child, now I love, and I am a woman; but I will never say so, no, never. Like a hidden treasure, I will guard it more than life. My first instinct is to conceal my secret feelings; I will be merry again (*sings*).

"I'd be a butterfly born in a bower,
Roving forever from flower to flower,
And kissing all buds that are pretty and sweet."

FRANK (*comes forward. She looks up and stops singing. He takes her hand, boxes low over it*). To think that I have not seen you for a week.

MARIE (*trying to appear unconcerned*). Is it, indeed, a week?

FRANK. I hoped that you would have known how long I was gone.

MARIE. Your dear mother, my mother too, she desires me to say, has so filled up the time.

FRANK. I see that these are combined in my little cousin, the rose, the lily, and the stars

MARIE. Cousin, you told me not to say brother.

FRANK. Cousin will do for the present. What would you say?

MARIE (*looking down very demurely*). Roses and lilies have been heard of before, but what of the stars?

FRANK. Your eyes, Marie, are shining like stars, roses are on your cheeks and lips, and the lilies are here (*taking her hand, presenting a full-blown pink rose*).

MARIE. Oh! cousin, such words are not for me.

FRANK. More than that, Marie. Your heart and soul are fair—fair as the king's daughter; your love is a royal gift, and I ask it (*sinks on one knee and takes her hand*).

MARIE. Do you remember that I am only a poor orphan?

FRANK S. You are a princess to me; your own innocence and purity guard and surround you like a halo. I lift mine eyes when I look to you, and I only deem myself worthy to ask your love, because from the day when first I saw you, I gave you all the love and all the devotion which man can give to woman. My whole life shall prove to you that if a deep and holy affection can render me worthy of your hand, then only, dearest, can I ask it.

(MARIE raises her eyes to his).

FRANK. I am answered (*kisses the hand which he holds*). Can you love me, dear one? (*kisses her lips, rises and stands beside her*).

MARIE. The feeling is so new to me.

FRANK. Mamma wants to welcome you.

MARIE. What will your papa say?

FRANK. He is ready to welcome his daughter.

Enter MR. and MRS. STUYVESANT.

FRANK (*leads MARIE to meet them*). You called her daughter; now she is indeed your daughter (*MRS. S. embraces her. MR. S. imprints a kiss upon her forehead*). Daughter (*he says, and they retire. [Exeunt]. FRANK draves MARIE'S arm within his own; they walk about among the flowers*).

FRANK. So, love, may life ever be for thee, crowned with flowers, sheltered from every wind; yes, my life shall ever shelter yours, and yours shall crown mine.

(*MARIE looks lovingly up to him*).

FRANK. Shakespeare was wrong. True love does sometimes run smooth.

MARIE. Yes (*her eyes cast down*).

FRANK. My dear mamma made all smooth for me; she gave me life, and she has given me happiness with it.

MARIE. And she is my mamma, too.

FRANK. Yes, love, you have home and friends and father and mother now.

MARIE. And you gave them all to me (*looking up to him*).

FRANK. And you double to me every blessing and every joy.

MARIE (*smiling*). Delicious flattery.

FRANK. You know that I am a lawyer?

MARIE. Yes; and do you actually plead in court?

FRANK. Why not?

MARIE. You seem to me so young; the brother of the little children.

FRANK. I am old enough to be of some use to my Marie.

MARIE. You have already given me everything.

FRANK. I intend to go to Virginia and see what that Clerk, the Probate Judge, and the rest of that precious set are about.

MARIE. Do not leave me.

FRANK. You are the most precious thing on earth to me, Marie, whether you have nothing but the calico dress in which I first saw you, or whether you have a principality; but every manly instinct in my nature is roused by the treachery of those men. Sworn, to be faithful, bound by their duty to care for the orphans, thus to become the robbers and murderers of those whom they are trusted to protect.

MARIE. Robbers, we believe that they were, but how murderers?

FRANK. Because when you were thrown penniless upon the world by their cruelty, had life, health, or reason been the forfeit, would not they have been murderers? I feel as though I can take neither sleep nor rest until I pursue and overtake them.

MARIE. What can you do?

FRANK. I can scarcely tell before I see them; then I trust in Heaven to open some means to unmask their villainy.

MARIE. I fear for you, Frank.

FRANK. Never will I know fear in such a cause; you are no longer an orphan, Marie. You have now home and parents; you are loved by all who surround you; the children grieve for every hour of your absence.

MARIE. Oh, dear, I ought to return to them; I promised them the story of King John to-night.

FRANK. What about King John?

MARIE. How when he was taken captive by the Black Prince he was allowed to return to France to arrange the payment of his ransom. He promised either to pay an immense sum or to return, and, when he found that his people were already impoverished and suffering, he chose rather to return to England and die in captivity than to break his word.

FRANK. Well done, little lady; you speak as though you could have done so yourself.

MARIE (*clasp ing her hands*). I hope that I would have done so rather than break my word to one who trusted me.

Enter CHARLES. MARIE meets him. He kisses her. FRANK shakes hands warmly. They meet as already acquainted.

FRANK (*leading MARIE forward*). Permit me to present my promised bride.

CHARLES (*surprised*). Dear sister. Mr. Stuyvesant, my congratulations.

FRANK. From the first day that I saw her I have loved; she is no more an orphan, and remember I am your brother.

CHARLES. Welcome, brother.

FRANK. I intend soon to go to Virginia and see what that Probate Judge and Clerk are doing there.

CHARLES. Shall I go with you?

FRANK. My plan is to go alone, and appear as though I wished to investigate the titles and purchase the property. Supposing me a stranger to you, they will talk freely, and I shall find means, I think, to discover and unfold their web of deceit and villainy.

CHARLES. How those men despoiled us—rich men, too—how they divided out the inheritance of the fatherless!

MARIE (*solemnly*). I have seen a verse somewhere—

“Be afraid of the spoil
Which is gained without toil,
For God will square accounts.”

FRANK. I nothing doubt that God will give wisdom to my heart and strength to mine arm in this cause, and He will bring the right to pass. (*In a position of command, with emphasis*). I shall go forth in a strength which can not fail us.

CHARLES. Does your father consent?

FRANK. He suggested it.

Enter three little boys. They surround MARIE. Two take her hands, the least clings to her skirt.

MARIE. Yes, I must go.

FRANK. You will not leave us?

MARIE. I ought to do my part; I always tell them a story, and hear their prayers before they go to sleep.

FRANK. Let us hear the story, too.

MARIE (*archly*). I am sure I can not keep you from coming.

[*Exeunt.*]

CURTAIN.

ACT VI.

SCENE I.—*Office of the Clerk of Court, same as in Scene I. Another room, farther back, must open from the office, and a hall on one side. A secret cupboard in the wall. Outside should be a large placard on which the words are visible, "Sale of the Randolph Estate." CLERK is sitting at a table. PROBATE JUDGE is standing. LAWYER FOX sits in a chair, tilted back against the wall.*

JUDGE (*should be speaking when the curtain rises*). I seem to see my daughter begging her bread—alone in the streets. Terrible dreams scare my sleep; dreadful ideas oppress my waking thoughts! I can not free myself from them. I remember that widow, ruined by the war. She came to me to help her. She trusted me. You were in partnership with me then, Fox; you were more hard-hearted than I. You know we kept her home for her, and then sold it for costs. It killed her, and now I seem to see her again; and that orphan girl, she is always before me. Sometimes she is alone in the street—sometimes hired out as a servant—sometimes it is Marie, and sometimes it is my little Susie. Oh, if men could know when they begin a course of deceit and villainy what they are coming to; if they could see it from the beginning, surely they would choose the path of virtue. What is labor—hard daily labor, with a clear conscience and an upright mind—compared to the torments which pursue me? And when I have sinned for money, and lost my soul for money—what can I do with it? I can not eat but one dinner, nor wear but one suit of clothes, nor live in but one house at a time. How little it can really do! Yet money maddens the mind. There is an intoxication of wealth and pride which lures us on, saying, my lucky star, I will not fail! Thus it was that Napoleon rushed into his Russian campaign. The intoxication of success led him on to ruin. And yet I can not stop—I can not throw off the habit of a lifetime.

Still I want gold—all the time I want gold. I can not rest except I have added something to my hoard each day. When I see that girl's face before me, still I want her gold. And you, Fox, when you helped me to defraud that widow—when we killed her—you were in it all as well as I; where is your conscience that it does not speak? Do you expect to live forever? How do you still that inward voice which speaks to me ever, night and day?

FOX. How do you know that there is any hereafter? It is just your idea; you have no solid foundation for it. Did ever any one come back to bring word where he went or how he fared? We know nothing of the future man—you start at shadows and let realities go by. Tell me of a pretty farm or of a profitable mill, which can be got by a little sharp practice, that is something tangible; but what can dreams and shadows and faces which appear do for you?

JUDGE. I feel within me that I shall soon be called to give an account for all these things, and I am not ready. I shall take that journey, and I have made no preparation.

CLERK, *while he is speaking, has opened the secret receptacle, and brought out brandy and glasses, presents a glass of brandy.*

JUDGE. No; let my conscience speak for once, she has not often been heard, (*to CLERK*), and you, Danielson, you were once a Methodist; when you were poor you were religious; it is making money which has caused you to forget your religion, and made you as wicked as anybody, though you use fair words and cover it up with deceit.

CLERK. This is getting awful; drink; you only need a stimulant (*presenting the glass*).

FOX. Take it, man; there is something tangible; don't tell me about dreams and faces.

JUDGE (*tasting the liquor*). What can riches do for me now, I am fast going where I can not carry them; if all the gold which I have unjustly gained were placed in my coffin it would not go with my spirit when unclothed I stand before my Creator; it would weigh me down (*passes into the inner room while speaking*).

Knock at outer door. Enter FRANK STUYVESANT, accompanied by AUGUSTUS O'LEARY, disguised as a servant.

FRANK S. I have been looking at a plantation which I see you have advertised for sale.

CLERK (*very politely*). Certainly it is for sale.

FOX (*drawing up a chair for FRANK*). Splendid climate, sir; garden of the world.

CLERK. Superior to Mentone, fine summer climate also; near the mountains.

FRANK. I am particularly pleased with the old family mansion which I have inspected.

CLERK. A very fine place.

FOX. Excellent family lived there.

CLERK. I had the highest possible regard for the late Mr. Randolph.

FOX. Beautiful mansion, fine grounds.

FRANK. I hear that there is some dispute about the ownership of the estate; how would titles be given?

CLERK. Perfectly square.

FOX. Abundantly good.

FRANK. Who does it belong to now?

FOX. It is likely to belong to us, and we wish a responsible purchaser.

FRANK. Who was the last owner?

FOX. A gentleman of the old Virginia family of Randolph.

FRANK. And where is he?

CLERK. Died some years ago.

FRANK. Any children?

FOX. There were heirs, but they have disappeared from this part of the country, and it is of little use to advertise for them; the debts will take the property.

FRANK. Did the late Mr. Randolph leave a widow?

CLERK. Yes, a feeble, delicate lady; she also is dead.

FRANK. Please to let me examine the judgments which you say will take the property.

(CLERK *takes out ledgers and documents*).

FOX (*smiling blandly*). We see at once, sir, that you belong to the upper ten, exactly the purchaser whom we would like to secure.

FRANK S. (*examines the papers*). Please to let me have certified copies which I can look over at my leisure. (*Lays a piece of gold upon the table.*)

CLERK (*calls to young man in the inner room*). Here Barnard, copies immediately.

(*Young man goes to a desk, appears to write.*)

FRANK. Is there any claimant other than the heirs of the late Mrs. Randolph?

FOX. None, sir; title perfectly clear, but debts take the estate.

FRANK. You warrant the titles?

CLERK. Entirely.

FOX. Perfect; no doubt whatever rests upon them.

FRANK. I have heard something about a claimant.

CLERK. A mere man of straw; did not know how else to put off the children.

FOX. Did not like to tell them that the debts would take everything, our consideration for them was extreme.

FRANK. How did they come to be so much in debt?

FOX. May we understand that you are a man of the world, sir?

FRANK. Oh! certainly, I know what is what, though I am young.

FOX. You know then, sir, that persons in business sometimes engage in transactions which they would not altogether like to have closely sifted.

FRANK. Oh! yes, I know that.

CLERK. Are you anxious to purchase?

FRANK. I have seen no plantation which pleased me so much.

FOX (*winking at him*). Well, sir, if you will enter into our views, we can afford to knock off in your favor a couple of thousand or so.

CLERK. Is your servant to be trusted?

FRANK. Entirely, I confide all my little views and exploits to him.

CLERK. And is he always faithful?

FRANK. He would no more "peach" than myself.

FOX. And we might gratify him with a hundred or two.

FRANK. Do you hear, August—a hundred or two for you?

AUG. O'LEARY (*with Irish accent*). Thanks, your honor; it's like yourself.

CLERK (*to young man*). Take those papers into the other room, and finish them. Look what the Judge is about, and keep him there.

[*Exit* BARNARD.]

FOX. Now for business.

FRANK. Explain the titles.

FOX. When the late Mr. Randolph was a young man he was a little wild. Young men of spirit will be.

FRANK. I am a young man of spirit myself.

FOX. So much the better. He had a particular friend, who went to the bad, and was always draining him of money. Well, Mr. Randolph was not then of age, and he could not get all the money that his friend wanted. One night this young fellow was actually pursued by the bailiffs, and took refuge in a cabin at Mr. Randolph's quarter.

FRANK. His house?

CLERK. No, no; his servants' quarter.

FOX. The negroes feel for a fellow in hiding. They kept him safe, got the sheriff's officers on a false scent, and then sent to Mr. Randolph. He had the horses got out, rode all night with this young scamp, got the money, and gave his own note for it.

CLERK. His uncle and guardian heard of the transaction, plead infancy for him, and disowned it; but the usurer who lent it had it carried into a judgment against him. When Mr. Randolph came of age he was fool enough to acknowledge his handwriting and promise to pay the money—in fact, he did pay it; but when he was dead, and his widow was dead, there was no receipt filed, and that judgment was still open on the books, with interest for more than thirty years.

FRANK. But I tell you I am up to a thing or two—not that it may not serve a purpose; it must be out of date.

CLERK. We form a mutual aid association at this Court-house ; we all help each other sometimes. We found some convenient spaces in the Sheriff's books, and he obliged us by entering payments from time to time, which kept it in date ; and now it amounts to a large sum—more than everything there is.

FRANK. So far, so well ; but who owns it ?

FOX. That's a little partnership concern. We had a sale of it here, and bought it in among us.

CLERK. Advertised it, too, and nobody the wiser.

FRANK. How was that managed ?

FOX. There was a little newspaper conveniently set up, and conveniently went down again. We advertised in that.

FRANK. I see that even in this part of the world there are good business men.

FOX. You see the law makes each a check *on* the other—a beautiful system ; we check out our plans *with* each other, and all turns out convenient.

FRANK. A beautiful system.

CLERK. And it is mostly widows and orphans that we have to deal with. What do they know about anything ? The widow wanted to administer, but the Judge always asked her a sum which he knew she could not furnish as security, and objected to whoever she brought in. We knew she could not live very long, and we put off until we could administer ourselves, once for all.

FRANK. That was pretty sharp practice.

CLERK. We haven't been twenty years in office for nothing.

FRANK. Did the Probate Judge give his assistance ?

FOX. Certainly, my young friend.

FRANK. Can I see him ?

FOX. He has had fits of hypochondria lately, and is not very well ; but he may wake up when he hears of money and a purchaser. He loves money as well as ever, and you remember we take off two thousand from the market price for you. I will see him.

FOX goes into the inner room and returns with JUDGE.

CLERK. Here is a purchaser for the Randolph plantation.

JUDGE. Can he pay in cash ?

FOX. Please to show some credentials and state your means. Your appearance and manners were enough for us ; but the Judge is an old hand—he used to be ahead of any of us.

FRANK shows papers.

CLERK. Descended from the first Governor—no end of money—excellent—all right.

They look at the papers together.

FOX. More than right, my fine fellow. We knew that you were somebody ; we could see that you have the look of a born gentleman and a lad of spirit, too.

CLERK. Ay, a lad of spirit. There is no milk and water about him.

JUDGE. Indeed a spirited, fine young fellow; we hope to deal with you, sir.

CLERK. To have you for a neighbor.

FRANK (*to JUDGE*). Can you warrant the titles to this property?

JUDGE (*aside*). I want that gold just as much as I did before Conscience ever spoke. (*Loud*.) Perfect, sir. All the officials of the County Court will join in making them complete.

FRANK. Please to show me how they will be expressed.

CLERK. We bought that judgment from the heirs of the original holder and doctored the books so that it will take everything.

FRANK. Suppose receipts are hereafter produced by the heirs?

CLERK. It seems a great negligence on our part that we have not taken possession of the family papers, but we have been prevented so far.

FOX. In truth, sir, there are some families of Mr. Randolph's old servants still on the place. There is the old woman who was nurse to the children. Since they left she and her family have moved into the servants' rooms adjoining the house, and they openly say that no one shall touch anything until they see their young mistress here and she says the word.

JUDGE. I had as lief face a file of soldiers as that old woman, and she has seven sons to back her.

FRANK. How would a purchaser, then, take possession?

FOX. When a sale has once taken place, it will be the duty of the sheriff to call a posse, if necessary, and place the owner in possession. You have then only to examine the papers and destroy what you will.

While FOX is speaking the CLERK's clerk has entered the room and delivered the copies of papers to FRANK STUYVESANT, who has placed them in an inside vest pocket and buttoned his coat over them. As FOX has finished speaking he draws himself up and replies.

Permit me to introduce to you my friend, Mr. Augustus O'Leary.

The supposed servant rises, throws off his liveried overcoat, and with proud, indignant air and manner stands beside FRANK.

FRANK. Do you think my friend a good witness? It is in that capacity that he accompanied me.

JUDGE, FOX, and CLERK start back astonished.

FRANK. Permit me farther to inform you that I have the honor to be the promised husband of Miss Marie Randolph.

FOX. You deceived us.

FRANK. I did not deceive you, sir, and I dare you to say that

again. Had the property been sold, I would have purchased it because it was her childhood's home.

CLERK. We will give up everything if you will not expose us. (*Takes gold and notes out of the safe and hands them to FRANK.*) Here is the money now.

FRANK. So you were hoarding this gold while those children were sent out penniless upon the world. Had evil come to them, do you not know that it would have been required of you? I have with difficulty restrained my indignation as you disclosed the particulars of your vile plot. You (*to FOX*) solemnly swore to be faithful, just, and true in all legal transactions, to establish the right, to defend the innocent, and always to prefer the interest of your client to your own, and here I find you deliberately defrauding the orphans whom you should as a man, as a gentleman, and as a lawyer have felt yourself bound to guard and to protect. (*To the CLERK.*) You promised, in taking your oath of office, honestly and truly to administer the estates of the widows and orphans intrusted to your care, to act in all cases for their interest, and to protect them from the dishonesty of others. You promised these fatherless children to be as a father to them, and to regard their money as a sacred trust. You then form a plan to embezzle it. (*To the JUDGE, who seems already trembling and sinking.*) You are the highest officer of the law at this county-seat; you should have controlled the others. You solemnly swore in the presence of the Almighty, and called on Him to witness, that you would hold dearer than life or worldly interest the welfare of the bereaved and helpless ones—the widow and the orphan—committed to your charge. You are the guardian appointed by the law, and intrusted with the duty of protecting their property and their interest from the rapacity of others, and you join with them to rob these orphan children. You drove them from their home—you cast them upon the world, while you were to seize upon their estate and make a profit of their money; but Heaven itself has guarded them against you. Heaven surely inspired and enabled those simple, faithful servants to protect their home and private papers from your sacrilegious approach, and Heaven has raised them up a defender and an advocate in me.

While FRANK is speaking, the JUDGE totters and sways. As FRANK ceases, he sinks heavily to the floor; his face should be red, almost purple, then change (if it can be done) to ashy paleness as he falls. The CLERK, who has remained in his arm-chair, takes his crutch, and attempts to rise. FOX goes over to the JUDGE and tries to raise him, his eyes open and stare wildly, close and he is dead.

FRANK. This is indeed the judgment of God.

CLERK. I beseech you not to betray us.

FRANK. I give you three days to leave the country, never to be seen here again. And, hark, leave your houses and lands—your ill-

gotten gains—to make restitution to the widows and orphans whom you have robbed and deceived for twenty years.

[*Exit FRANK S. and O'LEARY.*]

SCENE II.—*I hall outside the door of the CLERK'S office. CLARINDA is standing in expectant, eager attitude. Her sons (some or all seven, they should be tall, strong men) are grouped a little distance from her.*

Enter from CLERK'S office FRANK S., accompanied by O'LEARY. She seizes his (FRANK'S) hand and falls upon her knees before him.

CLARINDA. Tank de Lord, dis my n'young massa; tank de Lord who has plead for de faderless. (*Her sons bow low, and smile upon FRANK, and look their delight while she is speaking.*) CLARINDA (*continues*). Ebervy night ob de full moon we has walked roun' dem men, and prayed de Lord to look upon dem and on our missy; and de Lord hab looked on dem (*rising to her feet, and looking up*). De Lord hab had dem in derision.

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*MRS. STUYVESANT'S parlor. MRS. S. and MARIE are seated together.*

MRS. S. (*reading a letter*). "Marie and Charles are now in undisputed possession of Randolph hospitality. Until they arrive, August and I represent the family here. Clarinda and her sons amount to quite a clan; when I returned to see them again, they surrounded me, embracing my knees and kissing my hands. Nothing would suit but that I must take up my abode in the house, that they might feel as though one of the family were at home again. That night they gave a ball upon the lawn; genteel and ancient family servants assembled in great numbers. I was serenaded and complimented until I felt like a king or a patriarch. I made a speech and assured them that right must triumph in the end. I have promised Clarinda that we will spend the Christmas among them.

"And now, mother dear, I end with a petition. If Marie be not unwilling, let everything be in readiness, and let me call her mine to part no more, as soon as I arrive. With a heart full of thankfulness and love, Your affectionate son,

"FRANK STUYVESANT."

MRS. STUYVESANT. What shall I say, Marie dear, you are to do just as you choose. Is he too presumptuous?

MARIE. As you and he will, dear kind mother; my heart is too full of love and gratitude to say him nay.

MRS. S. (*embracing her*). Darling daughter; darling, none but the brave deserve the fair, none but the brave—none but the

brave—none but the brave deserve the fair. (MRS. S. *in a transport.*)

Enter servant with a letter on a silver waiter.

MRS. S. (*reads*). He will be here to-morrow (*kisses MARIE*); don't disappoint him, darling. (MRS. S. *throws open the door of a small room, where are seen laces, flowers, silks, girls at work*). Sew the flowers on the dress; there is the veil; orange blossoms.

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.—MRS. STUYVESANT'S parlor, conservatory beyond. A marriage bell of white flowers is set up in the parlor. Other decorations for a bridal. Little girls appear scattering flowers. A clergyman in Episcopal robes stands ready, book in hand. CHARLES, some guests, the children, baby too, in charge of two neat servant girls, are grouped. FRANK enters in full dress, flower in button-hole, etc. Stands near the marriage bell. MR. and MRS. STUYVESANT enter with MARIE between them in her bridal robes. FRANK takes his station under the bell.

MR. S. (*leads MARIE to his side, and lays her hand in his, says*): I give away the bride.

FRANK *hands the ring to the clergyman, who says*: I bless the ring.

CURTAIN.

FINIS.

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